THE
CENTENARY OF THE

PHELAN MEDAL



1926 — 2026



100 YEARS OF
SYDNEY AUSTRALIAN RULES FOOTBALL'S
HIGHEST HONOUR

TIME ON
2026

Front cover images – Jim Phelan, Cliff Barnsley's 1941 Phelan Medal, with Erskineville Oval in the background

Back cover image – Reg Garvin (1936 Phelan Medal winner) taking a mark in the ANFC Carnival match between NSW and WA at the SCG in 1933

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Editorial

In this edition of our annual journal, *Time On*, we celebrate the centenary of the Phelan Medal with profiles of the 84 footballers who have won the prestigious award (1926-2025). We also look back at the history of the Sydney football best and fairest award which was first presented in 1926.

The medallists have come from a variety of places both locally and distant; from the top competitions in the capital cities, from the suburbs of Sydney and from the football heartlands of the bush. Fifteen players have won the Phelan Medal on more than one occasion, while two of those footballers, Jack Williamson and Rod Podbury, won the award four times. We present more detailed profiles of those most highly honoured 15 players in the award's chronology.

The publication represents a collegial effort by a team of members from the NSW Australian Football Heritage Association. In its compilation we have sought to utilise the knowledge and research interests of multiple writers, together with the skills of our photographic editor and artistic designer.

This collaborative publishing project revealed untold stories, forged connections with footballers from many generations, and unearthed significant historical memorabilia for the Phelan Medal.

Information on the history of the Phelan Medal and the medallists has been garnered from a range of sources. We have dug deep into the historical records preserved by the association. The *Football Record*, extending back to the 1920s, was a particularly useful resource. Newspaper reports helped fill many gaps, while interviews with some of the medallists provided first hand recounts and deeper understanding. Among other valuable sources, we acknowledge AFL Sydney for the Phelan Medal Pocket Profiles published on their website.

We have moved into the era when women's football is now widely played and celebrated. As such, the Mostyn Medal awarded to the best and fairest women's player in Sydney football is now an integral part of the annual awards program of the league. In this publication we have concentrated our attention exclusively on the Phelan Medal winners but appreciate that at in the future publications celebrating both the Phelan Medal and the Mostyn Medal will be appropriate.

Our journal, *Time On*, in 2026 is available in print and there will also be an electronic version. We hope readers enjoy exploring the Phelan Medal's rich, century-long history and the inspiring stories of its winners.



100 years of Sydney football's best and fairest award

The Phelan Medal stands today as the most prestigious individual award in Sydney Australian football, recognising the best and fairest player in the AFL Sydney Premier Division. Its history, however, stretches back one hundred years and reflects the evolution of the game in New South Wales and the broader Australian tradition of honouring excellence through best-and-fairest medals.

In 1898 William Magarey, the inaugural Chairman of the South Australian Football Association, who believed strongly in rewarding not just skill but sportsmanship, presented a medal to the Association to be awarded annually to the "fairest and most brilliant" player. The Magarey Medal set the template for later awards: votes cast by umpires, an emphasis on fairness, and a celebration of individual excellence within a team sport. In 1921 in Perth, Alfred Sandover, a prominent Perth businessman, followed this tradition. The Sandover Medal used the same system as that developed for the Magarey Medal emphasising fairness as much as dominant play and reinforcing the idea that Australian football should reward integrity as well as performance. The most famous of all best-and-fairest awards, the Brownlow Medal, was first presented in 1924 by the Victorian Football League. Named after Charles Brownlow, a former Geelong player and administrator, it has grown into the AFL's most prestigious individual honour.

Football administrators in Sydney did not want to be left behind. In 1926, Mr E J Ellis, Secretary of the NSW Trades Protection Association, donated a gold medal for presentation to the best and fairest player in the New South Wales Australian Football League based on the Magarey Medal system of votes being awarded by the field umpire. R H (Bobby) Powers of the Sydney club was awarded this first Ellis Medal, but not without some controversy. "Onlooker" writing in the *Arrow* argued that because umpires had more important tasks during matches their votes on the best player were not necessarily well informed. In Onlooker's view three other players deserved the award more than Powers. The umpire's decision remained in force and Powers also received the prize of a phonograph and record donated under the same conditions as the Ellis Medal by a Mr F H Edwards and treated similarly by the League.

The Ellis Medal was awarded again in 1927 and joined by a medal for the best and fairest player in Reserve Grade, the Keys Medal, donated by Mr. Hoc Keys, Vice-President of the League at the start of the season and manager of the 1924 state teams. Although best and fairest awards were made in 1928 and 1929 there appears to be no record of who donated the prize. Nor is there a record of what the award was called in 1928 although in 1929 it was awarded as the League Medal.

In 1930 and 1931 the award for the best and fairest as voted by the umpires was donated by Mr H Goodwin and called the League Cup.

In 1932 Mr Aub Provan, the President of the League, a stalwart of the Newtown Club and a former state player, donated a medal to replace the League Cup as the award for the first grade best and fairest player. The Provan Medal continued to be awarded annually until 1936 with Mr Provan being thanked for the donation each year.

By the late 1930s the award for best and fairest players had become a major part of the football calendar and in 1937 the League decided no longer to rely on donations for the award but to make the provision of it part of normal business. It replaced the Provan Medal for First Grade with the Phelan Trophy and the Keys Medal for Reserve Grade with the Sanders Trophy, naming them after long serving life-members of the League. By the following year the two awards were being officially called the Phelan Medal and the Sanders Medal.

Jim Phelan, after whom the medal would be now named, gave thirty-seven years of service to the game in Sydney. A founder of the Newtown club, and secretary of the League for 11 years, he is credited with steering the Sydney competition through The First World War and the severe financial problems caused by the attempt by the League to develop its own ground. He was also an avid promoter of the game until his death.

In 1942 the League reported that "in consequence of many changes in personnel of the teams and unavoidable intermittent appearance of prominent players it was decided to suspend competition for the Phelan and Sanders trophies for the 'duration'". In 1945 the League's *Annual Report* noted that from 1946 the Phelan and Sanders would again be awarded annually in the normal way.

Gradually further best and fairest awards joined these two long standing awards. In 1957 the Kealey Medal for third grade was established. From the 1970s and subsequent decades, restructuring of the competition resulted in a need for more best and fairest awards to recognise players in new or differently named grades. In 1971 the Hart Medal for the Sydney District Association, the Snow Medal for Division IIA and the McFarlane Medal for Division IIB were introduced. By 2013 the Snow Medal was awarded to the Division One best and fairest, the Sanders medal became the award for Division Two and the McFarlane Medal for Division Three.

They were joined by the Armstrong Medal and the Apted Medal for Divisions Four and Five. The Kealy Medal and the Hart Medal were now awarded in under 18 Division One and Division Two respectively.

In 2012 when AFLNSW took over the Sydney Women's Football League a best and fairest award was introduced without a named medal. In 2015 it was named for the long-time proponent of women's football, former member of the AFL Commission and current Governor-General, Sam Mostyn. The previous winners were considered winners of the Mostyn and the Mostyn Medal now has equal status in Sydney football with the Phelan.

In 2017, the James Medal was introduced for the Women's Division One best and fairest. A major realignment of best and fairest awards took place in 2018 with new medals being introduced for lower divisions. in 2021 no awards were made because of the cancellation of the season caused by the COVID pandemic. Further adjustments to the best and fairest awards due to competition changes were made by 2025 and the current list of awards is:

Men's Premier Division	Phelan Medal
Women's Premier Division	Mostyn Medal
Men's Division One	Sanders Medal
Women's Division One	James Medal
Men's Division Two	Snow Medal
Women's Division Two	Andrews-Burgmann Medal
Men's Division Three	McFarlane Medal
Men's Division Four	Armstrong Medal
Men's Division Five (North-West)	Apted Medal
Men's Division Five (South-West)	Granland Medal
Women's Under 20s	Tomkins Medal
Under 19.5 Division One (Men's)	Kealy Medal
Under 19.5 Division Two (Men's)	Hart Medal.

The Phelan Medal remains in pride of place as the senior award for the best and fairest player out of all the men playing Australian football in Sydney, an award now 100 years old.

Paul Macpherson

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The Phelan Medallists

1926 Robert Powers Sydney



As the winner of the inaugural Ellis Medal (the award later named the Phelan Medal), Robert Powers holds a special place in the history of football in Sydney. Powers was born in 1900 at Richmond, Victoria. He attended Caulfield Grammar School where he was far more impressed with being captain of the school football team rather than being dux of the school. In October 1918, Powers enlisted in the AIF, however he did not see service overseas. In 1919 he moved to Mosman in Sydney where he worked at the Federal Taxation Office. He was one who formed a team called 'Taxation' which played in the second grade in Sydney in 1920. The team changed its name to Public Service in 1921 when it won the premiership in that division and again in 1922. In 1923 the side disbanded when most of the players moved to the Sydney Club where Powers was appointed captain. He also captained the 1924 NSW team against the VFL. Powers represented NSW on eight occasions between 1923 and 1926. His football career ended in 1927 when he was knocked unconscious for 24 hours. He bore a lump in his forehead for the rest of his life and never played again.

Ian Granland

1927 George Knott Western Suburbs



George Knott from the Western Suburbs club won the Ellis Medal, the best and fairest award in 1927. A rugged defender, playing primarily at full back, he played every game of the season wearing number 8. Knott stood out in a poor team; Wests finished second last, winning only three games for the year. Coming originally from Victoria, Knott, a sailor in the Navy, was posted to Sydney in late 1920. From 1921 to 1925 he played as a forward for East Sydney, being the league's leading goalkicker in his first year. He moved to Wests in 1926 and played there until 1929. Knott was selected in NSW state teams in 1922, 1925 and 1927.

Paul Macpherson

1928 WR (Billy) McKoy Sydney



WR (Billy) McKoy was a wingman from Albury who played for the Sydney club. He won the Provan Trophy (later renamed the Phelan Medal) in 1928 and 1929 and was a runner up in 1930. McKoy also played in the Sydney Football Club's Premiership teams of 1925 and 1931.

Billy McKoy played 36 games for NSW from 1923-1934 starring at the 1933 National Carnival in Sydney. He played in four triennial carnivals. McKoy famously kicked the winning goal over Victoria at Erskineville Oval in 1925. *The Argus* (17 August 1925) described the moment: "Excitement ran high during the closing 10 minutes of play. The crowd swayed to and fro, and there was a great surging roar of cheers as McKoy, from a free kick, shot the ball true, and scored the winning goal."

He played his early football at Albury High School before moving to Sydney where he initially played with Public Service, a Second Division team comprising mostly ex-Victorians. Billy worked at Taxation and also played in their rugby union team as fullback.

McKoy was a talented athlete with the Botany club, particularly in the quarter mile hurdles, the 440 yards and the 220 yards sprint events. He won the state title for the 440 yards in 1928.

Initially a rover, he played as a wingman for most of his career. His pace, brilliance and ability to kick accurately with both feet ensured his position in the state team. Billy McKoy played more than 200 games, but he was never tempted by offers from the Victorian clubs.

In 1930, 1931, 1932 McKoy was vice captain of Sydney (known as the 'Redlegs'). Off the field, he served as treasurer of the club. Billy McKoy was awarded life membership of the Sydney Football Club in 1935.

Peter Clark

1929 WR (Billy) McKoy Sydney

The 1929 Provan Trophy was won by Billy McKoy, his second successive Provan Trophy.

1930 David Elliman North Shore



David Elliman, captain-coach of North Shore, won the League Cup, the best and fairest award in 1930. He amassed 21 votes well clear of Billy McKoy in second place on 13 votes. Elliman came to Sydney for business reasons after playing 20 games for Melbourne and three for Hawthorn as well as appearing for both Williamstown and Camberwell in the VFA. Playing for North Shore from 1928 to 1932, a 173 cm, 75 kg, centre or half-forward he was noted as a fearless and polished player. In announcing his award, the league's *Official Programme* noted of Elliman that "although playing with one of the weakest teams [he] has been consistently good all season and in addition played brilliant football in the Carnival games." In 1933 he moved to Canberra, continued his football career and coached the ACT side in the 1933 Carnival.

Paul Macpherson

1931 George Jenner St George



George Jenner from the St George club won the League Cup, the best and fairest award in 1931. Coming from the junior team Erskineville Federals, Jenner made his debut for St George in the first game of the 1931 season as a nineteen-year-old centre half forward. After 11 rounds he had kicked 15 goals but was then moved to the half-back line where he spent the rest of his career. He represented the state in four matches between 1931 and 1935. Jenner ceased playing after the 1936 season due to the demands of his butcher's business but returned in mid-1938 to play two more games when the St George senior team had been badly depleted by the absence of eight players in the state team. He later was one of the founding members of the Western Suburbs club.

Paul Macpherson

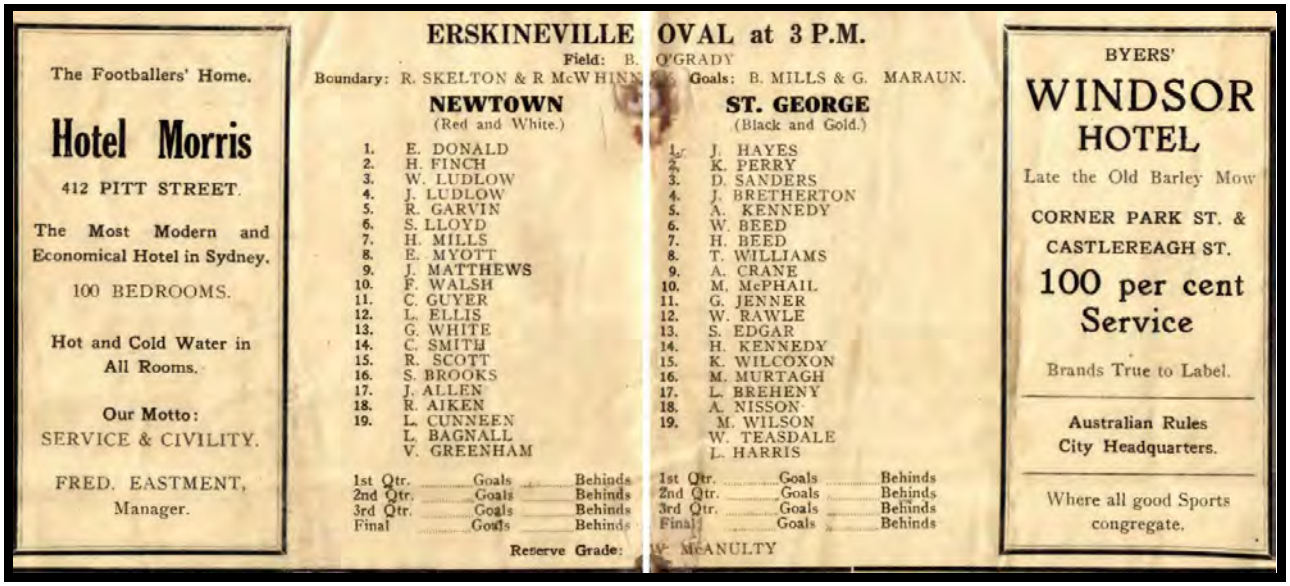
1932 Len Harris St George



Len Harris from the St George club won the Provan Medal, the best and fairest award in 1932. A stockily built well-balanced rover particularly noted for his accurate stab passing, Harris was a surprise winner of the umpires' votes in his first year in Sydney football. Not allotted a guernsey number until the third game of the season and not selected in that year's state side, he was however seen by his club as one who "would go through match after match and play good hard football and always receive the admiration of his opponents."

A knee injury, requiring hospitalisation, forced Harris out after round 5 in 1934. He came back again in 1935 but played only seven games before retiring to move to the country.

Paul Macpherson



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Boundary: R. SKELTON & R McWHINNEY Goals: B. MILLS & G. MARAUN.

	NEWTOWN (Red and White.)	ST. GEORGE (Black and Gold.)
1.	E. DONALD	J. HAYES
2.	H. FINCH	K. PERRY
3.	W. LUDLOW	D. SANDERS
4.	J. LUDLOW	J. BRETHERTON
5.	R. GARVIN	A. KENNEDY
6.	S. LLOYD	W. BEED
7.	H. MILLS	H. BEED
8.	E. MYOTT	T. WILLIAMS
9.	J. MATTHEWS	A. CRANE
10.	F. WALSH	M. McPHAIL
11.	C. GUYER	G. JENNER
12.	L. ELLIS	W. RAWLE
13.	G. WHITE	S. EDGAR
14.	C. SMITH	H. KENNEDY
15.	R. SCOTT	K. WILCOXON
16.	S. BROOKS	M. MURTAGH
17.	J. ALLEN	L. BREHENY
18.	R. AIKEN	A. NISSON
19.	L. CUNNEEN L. BAGNALL V. GREENHAM	M. WILSON W. TEASDALE L. HARRIS

	Goals	Behinds	Goals	Behinds
1st Qtr.				
2nd Qtr.				
3rd Qtr.				
Final				

Reserve Grade: [illegible] McANULTY

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In 1932 St George changed their colours from the "old Dragon to the quiet Black and Gold of Richmond" hoping that a change of fortune would come their way.

Source: *Football Record* 23 April 1932

1933 Jack Williamson Eastern Suburbs



David John (Jack) Williamson won the Provan Medal, the best and fairest award in 1933. He was to win the league's best and fairest award another three times: in 1935, 1937 and 1938.

Born in Kyabram in Victoria, Williamson grew up and started playing football in Leeton. He came to Sydney in 1931 as an 18-year-old and played with the Eastern Suburbs reserve grade side. Promoted to the senior team at the start of 1932 he never looked back. A 178 cm, 76 kg centre-half-back, the *Football Record* said of him, "Besides having a safe pair of hands he can kick with either foot and has plenty of speed … taking splendid high marks and coming through the crushes without flinching." He was regarded as particularly competent in handling a wet ball, "equal to anything seen in Melbourne in this regard." Also known as a prodigious kick, he was recorded in a competition in Tasmania with reaching 66 yards 2 inches (over 60 metres).

In 1933 Williamson was recorded in the best players for Easts in almost every game, quite often listed as the outstanding player for the match. He played in four of the Carnival sides and it was not a surprise when he emerged as the Provan Medal winner.

At the beginning of 1935 Williamson applied unsuccessfully for a clearance to become captain-coach of South Sydney. After being refused he played on happily as captain of Easts with the *Football Record* saying of him on winning his second Provan Medal that "he has been one of the outstanding players NSW has produced … an outstanding example of the calibre of player the Australian game produces …"

By 1937 his victory in the Phelan Trophy came as no surprise: "this is the third time the umpires have given him the title and there is no doubt he richly deserved it … His success will be popularly acclaimed."

Williamson's fourth best and fairest in 1938 brought an outpouring of pride from Easts: "'Jack' we are proud to know you belong to our club as by your good clean sporting game on the field of play, your general conduct in and around the training rooms and the fact that you still wear the same size hat would make any sportsman proud to know you."

He played on until 1941 then enlisted in early 1942. The outstanding Sydney footballer of the decade, he played for NSW on 27 occasions. His sporting prowess was not limited to football; he also played basketball for the state and topped his competition batting average as an A-grade cricketer.

Paul Macpherson

1934 Frank Smith South Sydney



Frank Smith, winner of the 1934 Provan Medal, learnt the early rudiments of the game at the Gardeners Road Public School. His outstanding performances in the juniors attracted the attention of the South Sydney selectors in 1933. Smith's sterling displays earned him representative honours for NSW on nine occasions, being recorded as a best player in two. Frank Smith, who always made the ball his object, played over 100 first grade games with South Sydney from 1933-1940.

Ian Granland

1935 Jack Williamson Eastern Suburbs

Jack Williamson who was awarded the Provan Medal in 1935 had also won the award in 1933.

1936 Reg Garvin Newtown



Locally born Newtown player Reg Garvin made his mark in Sydney football prior to being recruited by VFL club St Kilda for the 1937 season. This followed his Provan Medal win as the best and fairest player in 1936. Garvin played his junior football for Newtown commencing in 1930 before making a meteoric rise upon debut in the seniors in 1933 at age 20 by playing for NSW in the ANFC interstate carnival at the SCG. He topped off an outstanding season by playing in a premiership for Newtown. Garvin played nine games for NSW including against the VFL in 1933. At St Kilda he played 129 games winning two St Kilda best and fairest awards and was captain and coach St Kilda in the 1942-43 seasons. After leaving St Kilda in 1946 he joined Prahran in the VFA where he finished his career.

Rod Gillett

1937 Jack Williamson Eastern Suburbs

Jack Williamson who was awarded the Phelan Trophy in 1937 had also won the best and fairest award in 1933 and 1935.

1938 Jack Williamson Eastern Suburbs

The 1938 Phelan Medal was Jack Williamson's fourth best and fairest award. He had previously won the Provan Medal in 1933 and 1935 and the Phelan Trophy in 1937.

1939 Jack Guthrie North Shore



John ('Jack') Guthrie came to Sydney in 1938 from Melbourne where he had played for Old Melburnians in the Victorian Amateurs. He joined North Shore and quickly had an impact on Sydney football winning the 1939 Phelan Medal with 23 votes. On announcing his win, The *Football Record* declared, "Though of the dashing and vigorous type, his play at centre has always been scrupulously fair." He was runner-up to Cliff Barnsley in the 1940 medal count.

Guthrie's football contributions were extensive; he captain-coached North Shore (1940-41 and 1946-47) and served as club secretary, he was NSW captain and, in 1940, was appointed a state selector. Jack Guthrie captained NSW on 11 occasions between 1939 and 1947 and was named among the best players regularly. Like many other footballers at the time his sporting career was interrupted by service during World War II.

Peter Clark

1940 Cliff Barnsley Sydney



Clifford (Cliff) Barnsley was 19 years-old when he came to Sydney in 1937 from Broken Hill where he had played for the Centrals club. Signing up with the Sydney club he spent that year in the reserves but showed his ability when he tied for the Sanders Medal, the best and fairest award in Reserve Grade.

After breaking into the first-grade team in round 3 1938 Barnsley remained a regular selection at centre-half-back. He played the entire 1939 season without being much noticed outside his club team. He appeared to be more regarded by the football world in Melbourne than in Sydney; the *Sporting Globe* noting his omission from any state team that year opined that "recognition of his merit has been tardy."

In 1940 Sydney did not win a match, partly because its large contingent of players from the Navy had left with the fleet. Barnsley however stood out. He was usually listed among the better players, earned state selection and, in the words of the *Football Record*, "would run through a brick wall." In the Phelan Medal count he received 37 votes, a tally equalled by only one other player in the medal's history.

In 1941 Barnsley moved to full-back. Despite Sydney's continued lack of success, winning only four matches, his outstanding form continued. In July the *Football Record* contained an article on him in its "Our Footballers" series. Describing his playing style this article noted that "he seemingly sees only the ball; giving no attention to opponents. And that is one of the reasons for his success", and that "the forward who is guarded by him may account himself lucky to get even a few kicks." Reporting on his game for NSW against Victoria, it said "… he performed brilliantly. Showing more dash than any of our defenders, he frequently came through opposing forwards in fine style and ended his runs by telling kicks to the midfield."

The umpires gave Barnsley 27 votes for the year, well clear of another Phelan Medal winner, Jack Guthrie in second place on 18. Surprisingly not a great deal was made of the fact that this was Barnsley's second consecutive medal.

Barnsley played on in 1942, earning further plaudits and state team selections but in early 1943 he enlisted in the AIF. After the war he played one more season in Sydney football, turning out as full-back for St George in 1946 and playing in the losing grand final side.

Barnsley's two Phelan Medals are now owned by the NSW Australian Football Heritage Association.

Paul Macpherson

1941	Cliff Barnsley	Sydney

The 1941 Phelan medal was won by Cliff Barnsley, his second successive Phelan Medal.



Cliff Barnsley's 1941 Phelan Medal

1942- 1945	**Between 1942 and 1945 the Phelan Medal was not awarded**

1946	Bill Cottis	Newtown



William Charles Roy Cottis, better known as "Billy", was born and raised in Erskineville. He began his football with Railways in the Sydney Metropolitan Junior Football Association in 1938 crossing over to his local senior club Newtown in 1943. At age 19 he won the Phelan Medal in a premiership team that ended up being the start of a run of five consecutive flags. Cottis was a brilliant centreman who represented the State on five occasions. He was one of the best players in NSW's narrow 3-point win over Queensland at the Gabba in 1953. Billy Cottis was inducted into the AFL Sydney Hall of Fame in 2009.

Rod Gillett

1947 Ken Champion North Shore



Ken Champion was a born and bred Western Australian who had excelled at football at school then at WAFL level with Subiaco. War service with the RAAF prevented him continuing with his football career in Perth. After the war, in 1947, Champion moved to Sydney and played for North Shore where he won the Phelan Medal in his first year with the club. In 1948, he transferred to Western Suburbs in part because it was closer to where he lived but only after a difficult and high-stakes clearance wrangle. In his first season at Western Suburbs he again won the Phelan Medal, making him the only player to have won back-to-back Phelans at different clubs. There was a report in the *Football Record* on his win stating that Champion, "has been a model of consistency right throughout the season. He is captain and coach of Western Suburbs and played a big part in the success of the side towards the latter part of the season."

Although he obtained many individual accolades including the two Phelan Medals and multiple best and fairest wins, his real success came when he was a member of Western Suburbs first Premiership team in 1951. To get into the Grand Final, Wests had to overcome the might of Newtown (winners of the previous six premierships) in the preliminary final. "The game was one of the hardest and most rugged matches seen in Sydney, and played in a spirit where bumps were fairly and freely given and taken," stated the report in the Sydney *Football Record*. The *Daily Telegraph* reported on the battle with more detail and mentioned that police had to be called in to confront an unruly mob after the match. The Grand Final was just as willing. "Three times during the game central umpire Jack Leber cautioned West players for rough tactics." Yet despite the stern competition, Wests prevailed over Easts despite trailing by 16 points at half-time. It was a famous victory and Wests' first in the competition with big thanks given to the key defender and Phelan medallist from WA, Ken Champion. Another feather in Champion's cap was his representation for NSW on 16 occasions between 1947 and 1950.

Miles Wilks

1948 Ken Champion Western Suburbs

The 1948 Phelan Medal was won by Ken Champion (with 21 votes) playing for Western Suburbs. He won the previous year's award playing for North Shore.

1949	Ken Gilbert	Illawarra	



Ken Gilbert won consecutive Phelan Medals in 1949 and 1950 while playing for the Illawarra club. His success was even more meritorious considering Illawarra won only three matches in those two seasons. He played with the Geelong Thirds as an 18 year-old before moving to NSW in 1949 where he was employed as a technical cadet at the Port Kembla steelworks.

Ken was a rover standing just 5'6'' tall. In 1949 he played in 21 matches (13 first grade and 8 reserves) owing to Illawarra's shortage of numbers. He was praised by his club as a player never out of condition. In that year Gilbert attracted interest from VFL clubs, including South Melbourne.

Ken Gilbert was appointed captain coach of Illawarra in 1950, which made him one of the youngest player-coaches in NSW at that time. He won the 1950 Phelan Medal with 23 votes, his tally made up of five three vote and four two vote performances. Gilbert was astounded when he learned he had won the 1950 Phelan Medal. "I did not think I had a chance," he said. "I missed two games and was also heavy with the 'flu for a number of matches." (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 September 1950)

In 1951, Ken Gilbert was granted a permit to transfer to the Western Suburbs club after Illawarra withdrew from the Sydney League. Alongside fellow Phelan Medallist Ken Champion, he helped elevate the reformed Western Suburbs club and played in the Magpies first Premiership team in 1951. The *Sydney Morning Herald* (24 September 1951) reported that Gilbert was responsible for many of his team's goals due to his "intelligent passing and positional play."

He joined St George in 1954 and played with the Tigers until 1956. In representative football Gilbert played for Sydney against Newcastle in 1950 and for the NSW second 18 in 1955 against Combined Services.

Peter Clark

1950	Ken Gilbert	Illawarra	

In 1950 Ken Gilbert won his second successive Phelan Medal.

1951 John Hardy North Shore



During the 1950s, Australian footballers were rarely discussed in the Sydney newspapers, yet John Hardy's recruitment to North Shore in March of 1950 at least was covered in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in part one must presume because he came from a strong club in Carlton. "Rules players from Victoria" was the heading and within the article one obtained an insight into his skills. "Hardy was regular rover of Carlton's seconds last year, and also played five senior games. He is a polished left and right foot stab kick." In 1951, in his second year at North Shore, John Hardy won the Phelan Medal and the *Sydney Morning Herald* provided an outline of the achievement. Hardy's "total of 34 points [in the medal count] was described as remarkable. He was credited with seven firsts, five seconds, three thirds, and thus was placed in 15 of the 17 matches in which he played."

There was more success that followed because in 1952 Hardy led North Shore to their first premiership since 1921. The *Daily Telegraph* reported that a crowd of 5,500 attended the match and that "North players followed the half-time instructions of captain-coach John Hardy to 'win the game in the third quarter'." During this quarter, North's outscored Western Suburbs and obtained a break that they extended into the last quarter.

On top of the achievements of being a premiership player and a Phelan Medallist, Hardy also played for NSW as the state's number one rover in 1950, 1952 and 1954. One of his impressive legacies is the series of training photos on how to play the game taken in 1950.

Miles Wilks



John Hardy, 26 May 1950: Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

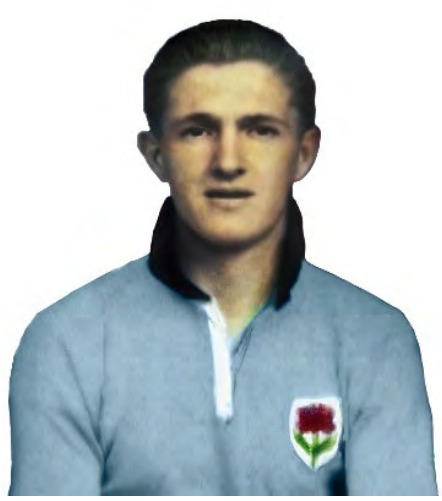
Channel 2 on Saturday afternoons from approximately 1.50 p.m. will telecast an hour of a V.F.L. match played the previous Saturday, whilst between 7.15 and 7.30 p.m. the same evening John Hardy will resume his informative round-up on local Australian Rules news.

Channels 7 and 9 will also include excerpts from V.F.L. games in their weekend sessions.

On Radio, Tiger Black will interview an Australian Rules representative on 2KY in his popular sporting roundup between 11.00 and 11.30 a.m.

Football Record 21 April 1968

1952 Frank Gascoigne South Sydney



Frank Gascoigne was a local South Sydney boy who learnt his football under Rupert Browne at Gardeners Road Public School. He played junior football on Moore Park with the Rosebery club. In 1943 he was recruited by South Sydney and was part of their victorious 1945 Reserve grade team. This was during WWII when Sydney football was full of highly rated interstate players. In 1951 he was captain of South Sydney, winning their best and fairest award. When he won the Phelan Medal in 1952 he had notched up 125 first grade games. He tallied 23 votes in the 1952 medal count. Frank Gascoigne represented NSW on eight occasions between 1947 and 1950, mostly playing on the half back line.

Ian Granland

1953 Geoff Davidson Sydney University



Geoff Davidson from the Sydney University club won the Phelan Medal in 1953 with 28 votes. He came to Sydney from the University of Melbourne in 1952 to study veterinary science. Davidson had commenced studies in 1951 and had been allocated to the "Blues" when Melbourne University Football Club split their club into two teams in the Victorian Amateur Football Association, Blues and Blacks. Originally from Bruthen in east Gippsland, Davidson completed his secondary schooling at Geelong College as a boarder and excelled at athletics and rowing and was a member of the first XVIII football team. He played at Sydney University until 1955, and after graduation in 1956 returned to Victoria to practice as a veterinary surgeon.

Rod Gillett

1954 Wally Bryce Liverpool



Wally Bryce, winner of the 1954 and 1955 Phelan Medals, played with Ariah Park in the Riverina before coming to Sydney in 1947 to join St George. In 1948 he transferred to the reformed Western Suburbs club where he played for three seasons and was the club's leading goalkicker in 1950.

Bryce moved to the newly-formed Liverpool club, known as 'The Rangers', in 1951. At Liverpool he was joined by his brothers Don and Bernie. Bryce captained Liverpool between 1952 and 1956 and was captain coach of the Rangers in 1955-56. Wally was a high marking full forward who kicked 13 goals in one match in 1957. In his first season with Liverpool he kicked 67 goals. The *Football Record* (12 August 1951) reported that, "Wally Bryce's high marking last Sunday was a sight to see, and in particular was the best ever seen in the local district." He was noted for his durability; Bryce did not miss a single game between 1951 and his 100th appearance for Liverpool in 1956.

Together with his first Phelan Medal, Bryce won Liverpool's best and fairest award in 1954. Illustrative of the quality of his football and how he caught the attention of umpires, is the fact that Liverpool won only one match in the two seasons that Bryce took out the Phelan Medal.

Later in his career he played at centre half back where his strong aerial work was regularly on display. In May 1958 the *Football Record* reported that Bryce "gave spectators and players a lesson in playing on, handballing and clever position kicking." After his coaching tenure at Liverpool ended he continued to play for the club until 1960.

In his Phelan Medal winning seasons, 1954 and 1955, Bryce polled 19 and 20 votes respectively. Wally Bryce represented the Sydney League against the Newcastle League on three occasions (1950, 1951, 1952) and played for NSW against both Queensland and Combined Services in 1955.

Peter Clark

1955 Wally Bryce Liverpool

In 1955 Wally Bryce won his second successive Phelan Medal.

1956	Ray Moore	Balmain			



Ray Moore commenced his football career in Ballarat Victoria. He was on St Kilda 's supplementary list in 1943 when he joined the RAAF. Moore was posted to Japan in 1946 as a member of the post-war occupational forces. In 1950 he settled in Sydney and signed with Western Suburbs. Centreman Moore won the club's best and fairest award in 1950 and 1951. In 1953 he transferred to the Eastern Suburbs club and was part of the club's successful premiership teams of 1953-54-55. He then transferred to Balmain, as their captain and coach, where he won the Phelan Medal in 1956. He represented NSW and the Sydney League on 14 occasions. Ray Moore retired from football in 1959.

Ian Granland

1957	Colin Waller	Liverpool			



Liverpool centreman Colin "Blue" Waller won the 1957 Phelan Medal with 17 votes. The *Football Record* in July 1957 praised Waller for his "brilliance in the air, combined with neat disposal, [he] completely nonplussed his opponent." He was the mainspring of the Rangers' attacks and his positional play in the centre was described as outstanding. One of the features of his play was accurate delivery by stab passes. Waller played three seasons for Liverpool (1955-57) before moving to South Australia where he worked at the Woomera Rocket Range.

He won the Area and Mail Medals twice (1962, 1964) in the Woomera Football League. "Blue" also shone at rugby league, tennis and cricket and was regarded as one of the finest all-round sportsmen ever to have lived in Woomera (Dave Turpin, *Footy Almanac,* 11 June 2025).

Peter Clark

1958 Kevin Batchelor South Sydney



Mercurial rover Kevin Batchelor joined South Sydney in 1958 after transferring from the Buckingham Football Club in Hobart. Buckingham competed in the State Schools Old Boys Football Association. Batchelor won his club's best and fairest award in 1955, 1956 and 1957. He also represented Tasmania in the National Amateur Carnival in 1956.

After coming to Sydney Kevin Batchelor won the 1958 Phelan Medal and in the same year kicked 32 goals for his club. In the lead up to the ANFC Centenary Championships in 1958 the *Football Record* described him as a "Clever, elusive rover-forward. Excellent kick with either foot."

He played 82 first grade games for South Sydney before taking two seasons away from football. After several clearance refusals he eventually transferred to the Sydney Naval club late in the 1965 season. Batchelor represented the state on seven occasions (1958-1962) and for Combined Sydney against South Melbourne in 1961.

Ian Granland

AWARDS 1958.

League Pennant,	First Grade Premiers,	Eastern Suburbs.
William Strickland Shield, (Donor A.J. Snow, Esq.,)	First Grade Premiers,	Eastern Suburbs.
A.N.F.C. Centenary Trophy,	First Grade Premiers,	Eastern Suburbs.
League Pennant,	Reserve Grade Premiers,	St. George.
James Curry Shield, (Donated by Family of late Life Member)	Reserve Grade Premiers,	St. George.
League Pennant,	Third Grade Premiers,	Eastern Suburbs.
Bob Dawes Trophy donated by family of late Mr. Dawes	Club Championship,	St. George.
"Phelan" Trophy, Best & Fairest,	First Grade,	K. Batchelor (SS).
"Sanders" Trophy, Best & Fairest,	Reserve Grade,	V. Ansell (Liv).
"Kealey" Trophy, Best & Fairest,	Third Grade	F. Cahill (NS).
"Frank Ludlow" Trophy, Leading goal-kicker,	1st grade	N. Findlay (N), 78

(NSWANFL Annual Report 1958)

1959 Ralph Turner South Sydney



A key defender, Ralph Turner won dual Phelan Medals, the first in 1959 whilst playing with South Sydney when he polled an incredibly high 37 votes, and the second in 1961 when he polled 24 votes when playing for Sydney Naval.

Turner started his football career with Coburg in the VFA at age 17. He joined the Navy in 1954 and was stationed at HMAS Albatross, near Nowra. As there was no local football competition in the area at the time, he along with other Navy personnel travelled to Sydney to play with South Sydney. In addition to winning the Phelan Medal, he won Souths' best and fairest awards in 1956 and 1959.

In 1960 Turner transferred to the Sydney Naval club and played a key role in their premiership win. The following season he was appointed captain coach of Sydney Naval which he relinquished at the end of the 1963 season. Turner played his final season with Naval in 1964.

The scribe for Sydney Naval wrote in the first edition of the *Football Record* for 1965:

> One of the fairest and most brilliant players ever to grace the Sydney football field the familiar figure of Ralph Turner will be greatly missed by the followers of the National Code this season.

Turner joined the RAAF in 1965 and was transferred to Point Cook in Victoria. He re-joined the football scene in Sydney after a transfer to the Richmond air base; he became captain-coach of the newly formed Combined Services team in Second Division taking them to a grand final in 1972 and to a premiership in 1973.

Ralph Turner represented NSW sixteen times over the period 1955-1964 including against Queensland and the VFA at the ANFC Division II Carnival in 1960 as well as against South Melbourne in 1961 and Hawthorn in 1964.

Ian Granland

1960 Tony Whish-Wilson Bankstown



Tony Whish-Wilson had an outstanding season of football with Bankstown in 1960. Not only did he win the Phelan Medal, but he played three games for NSW at the ANFC Division 2 championships in Sydney and won the club's best and fairest award. Captaining the team, he only played in 12 games of which Bankstown won just six.

A dashing centreman he polled 20 votes to win the medal. According to the *Football Record* in Bankstown's 10-point win over Balmain on 12 August 1960, "Tony Whish-Wilson overcame many difficulties and a severe injury early to be best afield once again. His display in the centre was excellent and his two goals were real gems. His clever positional play and accurate disposal stamped him as above average."

Originally from Tasmania, Whish-Wilson joined the RAAF in 1954 and saw active service in Malaya in 1957-58. Tony first played senior football for RAAF in the Wagga and District League in 1954 as a 16-year-old trainee. He then mostly played inter-service football for RAAF at various postings and following that half a season with Launceston in the NTFA when based there in 1958. A temporary stay at Bankstown Airport in 1960 saw him play for a season with Bankstown. Following a transfer to the Flying Training School at Pearce in WA he played for West Perth in 1961-62 and then University of Western Australia in 1963-64 where he was selected in the All Australian Inter-varsity team in 1964.

Rod Gillett

1961 Ralph Turner Sydney Naval

In 1961 Ralph Turner won his second Phelan Medal, on that occasion playing for the Sydney Naval club.

1962 Arthur Crisp North Shore



Western Australian Arthur Crisp won the Phelan Medal in 1962. In 1963 he was described by the *Sydney Morning Herald* as "one of the best centremen Sydney has seen, with a very safe pair of hands and good clearance with either foot." He came to Sydney from Claremont in the WAFL. In 1962 Crisp was named as one of the best players for the Combined Sydney team in the match against the strong South West District Football League at Trumper Park. In 1963 he announced he was changing codes to play rugby union for Manly, however that was a short-lived experiment. Crisp played four seasons for North Shore (1962-65) before moving to the Gold Coast.

Peter Clark

1963 Ray Sharrock Western Suburbs



Western Suburbs full back Ray Sharrock won the Phelan Medal in 1963, the season he played in the infamous grand final against Newtown, dubbed by Ian Heads as "The Battle of Trumper Park." Amid the mayhem and spite of the match, Sharrock was knocked unconscious. Originating from the Tooleybuc area in the western Riverina, he played with Wests before transferring to Grong Grong Matong during 1965. Sharrock represented NSW against Queensland, Canberra and Combined Universities in 1963, and Australian Amateurs in 1965. He also played for NSW against the South West District Football League in 1965 at Narrandera and was named the best player for the NSW team.

Peter Clark

1964 Ray Gwilliam South Sydney



Ray Gwilliam, a dashing defender, had an outstanding season with South Sydney in 1964 and topped the Phelan Medal voting with 24 votes. His work in the RAAF as an airframe fitter saw him transferred to the Richmond air base in 1954. He played for South Sydney in the 1955 season during which he represented Combined Sydney that beat the Broken Hill League in Broken Hill. Gwilliam returned to South Sydney in 1963 when he was transferred in the RAAF to Williamtown. He also won South Sydney's best and fairest award in both 1963 and 1964. Gwilliam was also selected to play for Combined Sydney against Canberra at Trumper Park. However, after his Phelan Medal win he elected play for the RAAF team that entered the Newcastle competition in 1965. Ray Gwilliam saw active service with the RAAF in Vietnam in 1966-67.

Ian Granland

1965 Noel Reading St George



Noel Reading came to St. George from Maitland in 1965 after that club folded. He had won the Don Rees Medal (Newcastle Football League best and fairest award) on four occasions: 1959, 1962, 1963 and 1964. He played two seasons, 1965-1966, with St. George at centre half back winning the Phelan Medal in his first year with a total of 15 votes. That year he also won the Berger Award, a Mini Minor car donated by Berger Paints. Reading represented NSW eight times over his career; four times whilst at Maitland and four while playing for St George. He returned to a reformed Maitland and played from 1967-1974, winning the Don Rees Medal for a fifth time in 1968. Reading was made a life member of the Newcastle Football League in 1983. Despite his relatively brief sojourn at St George, Reading was highly regarded. An excerpt from St. George club notes in the *Football Record* in 1965, reads, "Noel Reading … was very strong and solid at CHB. Marking and kicking strong drop kicks."

John Addison

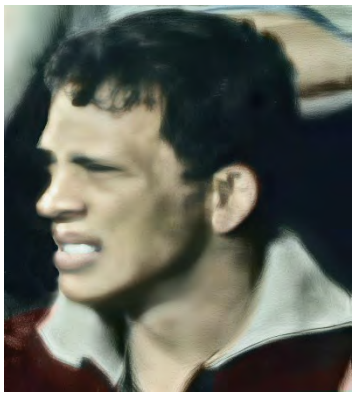
1966 Norm Tuxford Sydney Naval



Sydney Naval and NSW ruckman Norm Tuxford won the 1966 Phelan Medal in his first and only season of Sydney football. He tallied 20 votes, receiving points in 11 of the 18 matches. Football runs deep in Norm's Tuxford's extended family; he is a cousin of Geelong centreman Denis Marshall. Coming from South Fremantle, he did not play in 1965 due to a clearance dispute. In the first of three representative matches in 1966 Tuxford was voted best man on the ground playing for Combined Sydney against Combined Newcastle. Playing for NSW against Queensland he was among the best players, while he also played in the match against North Melbourne at the SCG.

Peter Clark

1967 Peter Body Sydney Naval



Peter ("Cheyenne") Body, the tenacious and versatile Sydney Naval centreman, won the 1967 Phelan Medal with 21 votes on a countback from Eastern Suburbs centreman Graham McKenzie. Brian Tyler from South Sydney was third on 20 votes. A physical instructor in the Navy from South Australia, Body played two seasons with Sydney Naval. He also represented Combined Sydney against Combined Newcastle as well as the victorious NSW team against Queensland in 1967. A highlight of Peter Body's football career was being a member of the touring Australian squad ("The Galahs") in the Gaelic football matches played in Ireland, England and the USA in 1967. Body played in all matches except the fiery encounter in New York. He explained, "They left me out of this one in preference to the big fellows, having been warned beforehand of what could be expected." (*NSWANFL Annual Report*, 1967)

Peter Clark

1968 Graham Hodge Southern Districts

Western Australian Graham Hodge won the Phelan Medal in 1968 with 15 votes, just one ahead of both Jimmy Costa from Newtown and Geoff Green from St George. In the same year he represented NSW on four occasions playing as a wingman and half forward flanker. Hodge, a talented all-round sportsman in Australian Football, rugby league and cricket, came to Sydney as a National Serviceman and joined the Southern Districts club. He helped set 'Districts' alight as they embarked on a ten-match winning streak to qualify for the finals. In announcing his medal win the *Sydney Morning Herald* (28 August 1968) reported that the 21-year-old Hodge was due to leave for service in Vietnam and that he "… has set something of a record in taking out the Phelan Medal in his first year in Sydney football."

Peter Clark

SOUTHERN DISTRICTS

Blue — White Stripes

Coach — Jack Quinn

	Age	Height	Weight
1. PETTIT, Jarvis	21	5 11	13 12
2. GUEST, Geoff	20	5 6	11 0
3. PRICE, Lew	21	5 9	11 7
4. HODGE, Graham	21	5 7	12 0
5. LIPA, Geoff	24	5 10	14 0
6. KEAST, Paul	22	6 3½	15 0
7. LOGAN, John	22	6 2½	13 0
8. BREHENY, Bill	22	5 9	12 10
9. BOXER, John	24	5 5	9 9
10. WILMOTT, Paul	22	6 1	13 7
11. LARKIN, Peter	21	5 9	12 10
12. McCOY, George	22	6 0½	13 7
13. KOSHIWI, Alex	21	6 0	13 6
14. STRATTON, Bob	23	6 0	14 0
15. DAVIS, Les	29	5 10½	12 7
16. JANKIEWICZ, Wes	22	5 9	12 0
17. BEDNARSKI, Dick	18	5 8½	12 0
18. KIBBEY, Dave	22	6 2½	13 12
19. KEYSER, Jeff	26	6 2	12 0
20. HUME, Bill	23	5 7	13 0
21. TREVORROW, Peter	21	6 1	13 7

FIRST QUARTER ..... GOALS ..... BEHINDS

SECOND QUARTER ..... GOALS ..... BEHINDS

THIRD QUARTER ..... GOALS ..... BEHINDS

(*Football Record*, 1 September 1968)

1969 Brian Tyler East Sydney



BRIAN "TOBY" TYLER being presented with the Phelan Medal and $400.00 by League President Bill Hart.
13

Dual Phelan Medallist Brian ("Toby") Tyler came to Sydney from East Perth in 1966 on a holiday with four mates and soon found an Australian Rules football club just down the road from where he lived in Kingsford. He immediately became a star player for South Sydney and a dominant force in the league. In his first season in Sydney Tyler was runner up to Sydney Naval's Norm Tuxford in the Phelan Medal. He was again second-placed in 1967, losing by a single vote to another Sydney Naval player, Peter Body.

After moving to Eastern Suburbs in 1968, Tyler went one better in 1969 winning the League best and fairest award with 22 votes playing mostly on the half back line. A career change to work in the Fire Brigade, together with an untimely injury on the verge of the finals, cost him opportunities to play in the 1971 and 1972 Grand Finals.

Book-ending his 129 game career in Sydney, after being lured back to Souths in 1974 as a paid player for the first time, Brian Tyler won his second Phelan Medal. His total of 20 votes included five three-vote performances. Tyler joined an elite band of players to have won the medal with two different clubs.

He was a strongly built footballer, solid in defence and an accurate kick with either foot. As a utility player, he was equally at home on the half back line, the half forward flank or in the centre. In an improving South Sydney team, Tyler was highly valued for his team spirit, ruggedness and durability.

In representative football, Brian Tyler played for both Combined Sydney and NSW. He was named among the best players in the interstate match against Queensland at the SCG in 1966. He also played for NSW against North Melbourne at Trumper Park that year. One of the most memorable moments in his career was to represent NSW Seconds against the VFL Seconds on the Melbourne Cricket Ground in 1969. Tyler recalls being in awe of the experience.

Peter Clark

1970 Bob McDonald Balmain



Robert "Bob" McDonald, a classy centreman for Balmain, won the Phelan Medal in 1970 on a count back from Mark Foxon of Sydney Naval, both players with 21 votes. McDonald came to Sydney in 1969 from Sturt in the SANFL. In his first season at Balmain he was a senior player and coached the Reserve grade side. McDonald ran seventh in the Phelan Medal and won the Balmain's best and fairest award. In 1970 McDonald was appointed captain coach of the Tigers' First grade team and he again won the club best and fairest award. In 1971 McDonald was once again captain coach and he ran third in the Phelan Medal. 1972 was his final year with the Tigers. Bob McDonald represented NSW twice – both in 1969 against the SANFL Seconds at the SCG and the VFL Seconds at the MCG.

Tommy Watt

1971 Noel Stewart Southern Districts



The Phelan Medal in 1971 was won by Southern Districts' brilliant rover Noel Stewart with 22 votes. He was posted to the Ingleburn army base in June 1970 for national service and polled 10 votes in his first season in the Sydney competition. The club scribe in the *Football Record* (1 May 1971) noted, "Rover Noel Stewart who carried the brunt of scouting the packs really proved what an acquisition he is to his ruckman." He represented Combined Sydney against Canberra and NSW in the interstate match against the ACT at Manuka Oval, Canberra in 1971.

Stewart began his footy at Bacchus Marsh in Victoria and it subsequently took him on an odyssey to football clubs in Ballarat, Kyneton, and Bendigo, Dandenong in the VFA, and Cribb Point on the Mornington Peninsula. He was invited to train with St Kilda after winning the Phelan Medal and worked in the Social Club having been trained as a bar steward in the army at the Paddington barracks officers' mess. Noel Stewart retired in after the 1983 season with Kennington in the Bendigo-Golden City League after playing a total of 317 senior games in his notable career.

Rod Gillett

1972 Paul Bouchier Newtown



Tall, athletic high-flying, blond-haired Newtown ruckman Paul Bouchier won the 1972 Phelan Medal with 23 votes. As well as winning the medal, he received a cash prize and a canteen of cutlery. Recruited from Deniliquin where he had played in the club's breakthrough Murray League 1966 Premiership under former Footscray grand final centre half-forward Graham Ion, Bouchier went to Western Suburbs for season 1969 after a stint at Hawthorn in 1967.

Paul Bouchier enjoyed immediate success with Wests by playing in the club's 1969 Premiership team and winning the club's best and fairest award. He left Wests in 1971 to join his brother George at Wilston Grange in the QAFL. Returning to Sydney in 1972 Bouchier joined Newtown and won the Phelan Medal as well as the club's best and fairest.

Bouchier joined East Sydney in 1976 and played in their premiership team under former South Melbourne and Subiaco goal-kicking machine Austin Robertson. Bouchier represented NSW on four occasions including against the VFL 2nds at the MCG in 1969 and in the 1972 win in Sydney as well as against Queensland in 1970 when he took on his brother George in the ruck. He was inducted into the AFL Sydney Hall of Fame in 2009.

Rod Gillett

June 12, 1972 THE FOOTBALL RECORD 9

PEN SKETCHES OF NEW SOUTH WALES TEAM

JOHN NORTHEY Played 125 games games with Richmond (Vic.). The most polished footballer in Sydney. A great "ballgetter" and a tremendous inspiration to his side. Has represented Victoria and N.S.W.

BOB JUBBER. Hails from Sandhurst in the Bendigo League. Exciting backman.

PAUL PAITRY. Product of the East Sydney Club in his 4th First Grade season. Has represented N.S.W. six times as a ruckman.

JOHN CAULFIELD. Originally from Richmond (Vic.), played the last five seasons with Port Melbourne, the last three as Captain. Represented the V.F.L. Dashing player in defence.

EVAN CONNICK from the Mid Murray League and played 50 senior games with East Sydney. Top class backman.

KEVIN PEARSON. In his third season at Newtown. The longest kick to be seen in Sydney for many years. A prolific full back of V.F.L. Standard.

MIKE HEALEY. From Canberra where he was leading goalkicker for A.N.U. Has a "iron" of pace and a good kick.

PETER FRIEDLIEB. First season in Sydney. Comes from Albury. Won the Best and Fairest for Albury once and runner up 3 times. Easily identified as the player with his sox down. Ace centreman.

KEN HUGHES. Product of St. George Club, has played 42 senior games. Good winger and half forward.

GEORGE ALLEN. In his first Sydney season. Played 78 senior games with Port Melbourne as a centreman. Brilliant player.

TONY FAIRCLOUGH. Product of the St. George Club and has played 35 Seniors games. Strong flankman.

N.S.W.

SKY BLUE—BLACK, RED WARATAH

		Age	Height	Weight
3	Gene MUDRY	23	5 6	12 7
4	Peter FRIEDLIEB	22	5 11	11 11
5	Ken FORBES	21	5 10	12 0
6	George ALLEN	23	5 9	13 0
7	Ken HUGHES	19	5 10	10 7
8	Paul BOUCHIER	25	6 2	14 0
9	John NORTHEY (Capt.)	28	5 9	11 3
10	John CAULFIELD	23	6 0	12 4
11	Bruce FORBES	25	5 10	12 4
12	Evan CONNICK	21	5 10	12 5
14	Bob JUBBER	18	6 1	12 0
15	Bill SKIPPER	25	6 0	12 7
16	Wally DAHLER	23	6 0	12 0
17	Tony FAIRCLOUGH	18	5 11	13 0
18	David WALDUCK	25	6 0	12 7
19	Kevin PEARSON	23	6 3	13 4
20	Paul PAITRY	21	6 1	13 10
21	Bob MITSON	26	6 1	14 0
23	Mike HEALEY	23	6 2	12 7
29	Jock McALPINE	21	6 2	13 0
30	Terry KNEEBONE	29	6 0	13 12
19	David SYKES	27	6 3	14 7

ERSKINEVILLE OV MONDAY 2.20
Field Umpire, SONNEMAN
Stand By B. SLOWSKI
Boundary, P. JOHNSON, J. PATTERSON
Goals, G. BRE D. INNES
Ground Manager, R. K. HESSION

ABC COVERS YOUR SPORT ON RAD 2 & 7
PLUS ALL THE SPORTING RESULTS

QLD.

(Maroon, White Q, White Collar and Cuffs)

		Age	Height	Weight
1	LLOYD, Warren	23	6 1	14 0
2	PELLY, Dennis	23	5 8	11 3
3	SKINNER, Warren	21	6 2	12 9
4	JUNKER, Shane	28	5 11	13 0
5	HUGHES, Des.	28	5 11	11 10
6	CLARKE, Barry	22	6 0	12 0
7	BACKWELL, Owen	20	5 7	10 4
8	SMITH, Don.	19	6 1	12 9
9	JACOB, Lindsay	25	5 8½	11 3
10	SHORT, Sel.	20	5 11	12 0
11	WELLER, Neville	19	6 2	13 11
12	CRAWFORD, Russell	20	6 3	11 13
14	PURDY, Kevin	25	5 9	12 10
15	EVANS, Garry	25	6 0½	13 1
16	MILLS, Kelvin	22	6 1	12 6
17	WAGNER, Gary	25	5 9½	11 0
18	ROBERTS-THOMSON, Barry	22	6 2	13 0
19	MOORE, Keith	19	6 1	12 7
20	NEAVE, Bruce	22	6 2	14 0
21	MEAKIN, Paul	22	6 1	14 3
22	TURNBULL, John	21	6 0	13 2
23	STACKPOOLE, John	25	6 2	12 12
25	HOWES, Ross	25	6 0	12 10
29	BOUCHIER, George	23	6 6	15 7

JIM MUDREY. Played rover for East Fremantle before coming to Balmain. Rugged style of player.

JOCK McALPINE. Newcastle player. Made the State side last year. Had one season with Eastlakes. Strong ruckman.

DAVID SYKES. Played 35 senior games with Fitzroy. N.S.W. Capt. Coach in 1970-71. Coached Newtown to a premiership honours in 1970. Has the ability to lift any side. Best CHF in Sydney for many years. A tidy mover.

KEN FORBES. Hails from Narrandera. In his 3rd year with West. Classy rover.

BRUCE FORBES (Ken's brother). Plays with Griffith in the Riverina. Top class winger.

BILL SKIPPER. Known as the "Body Beautiful" or Mr. Paddington. Rep. N.S.W. 4 times. Dashing half back.

TERRY KNEEBONE. Played 78 senior games with Woodville. In his first year with St. George. Uncanny judgment and strong mark.

WAL DAHLER. Played with Geelong Seconds before coming to Sydney. In his 3rd year with Easts. Reliable kicker, good mark.

BOB MITSON. A West Australian who has been a great player for Norths in the last 3 years. Best CHB in Sydney. Wonderful disposal.

PAUL BOUCHIER. Having his first year as Ass. Coach at Newtown, Rep N.S.W. in 1970. Big rugged ruckman. Big mark and long kick.

DAVID WALDUCK. Rep. Australian Amateurs in 1969. Classy half forward or wing.

1973 George Allen Western Suburbs



George Allen looked like Dane Swan, and he played like him too! This is what former Richmond dual premiership star and AFL coach John Northey said about him when discussing the Western Suburbs team he coached to a premiership in 1972.

George Allen arrived at Western Suburbs from VFA powerhouse Port Melbourne in 1972 and had an immediate impact on the competition. He made the NSW State team and played in the crushing win over the VFL Seconds team at the SCG. He was also a vital cog in the Wests Premiership team that won the Grand Final by 69 points.

In 1973 George Allen had a dominant season kicking 82 goals and being runner up in the league goalkicking to fellow Wests player Chris Bradle. Wests were narrowly defeated in the grand final by East Sydney, but George Allen capped off the season winning the first of his Phelan Medals, polling 22 votes.

1974 was another great year for George Allen and the Western Suburbs footy club. Although he did miss several games through injury, including the ANFC 2nd Division championship in Sydney, it was highlighted with Allen playing in Wests first grade Premiership win over East Sydney under former Port Melbourne team-mate and close friend John Caulfield. He also coached the reserve grade team to a premiership.

Allen was at his absolute best in 1975. He won his second Phelan Medal with 30 votes as well as Wests' best and fairest. He represented NSW against Tasmania in Hobart at which he was awarded the trophy for best player and played a key role Sydney's 5 point win over the strong South West District League in the State Championships at Narrandera. However, Wests went down to East Sydney in the local grand final in his farewell game in Sydney.

In October Allen led a group of 42 players and officials from the Western Suburbs club on a two-week promotional tour to New Zealand where they played games in Wellington and Auckland in what was a fitting finale for a highly successful stint in Sydney football.

He returned to Port Melbourne to play in their VFA Premierships in 1976-77. Allen finished off his illustrious playing career when he led Highett to a pennant in the Federal League in 1979. He later returned to coach Port to the 1987 Grand Final which they lost to Springvale.

Rod Gillett

THE CENTENARY OF THE

PHELAN MEDAL

1926 - 2026

SYDNEY AUSTRALIAN RULES FOOTBALL'S HIGHEST HONOUR





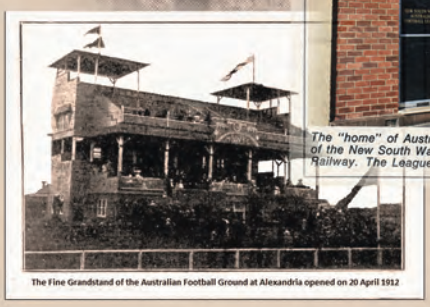








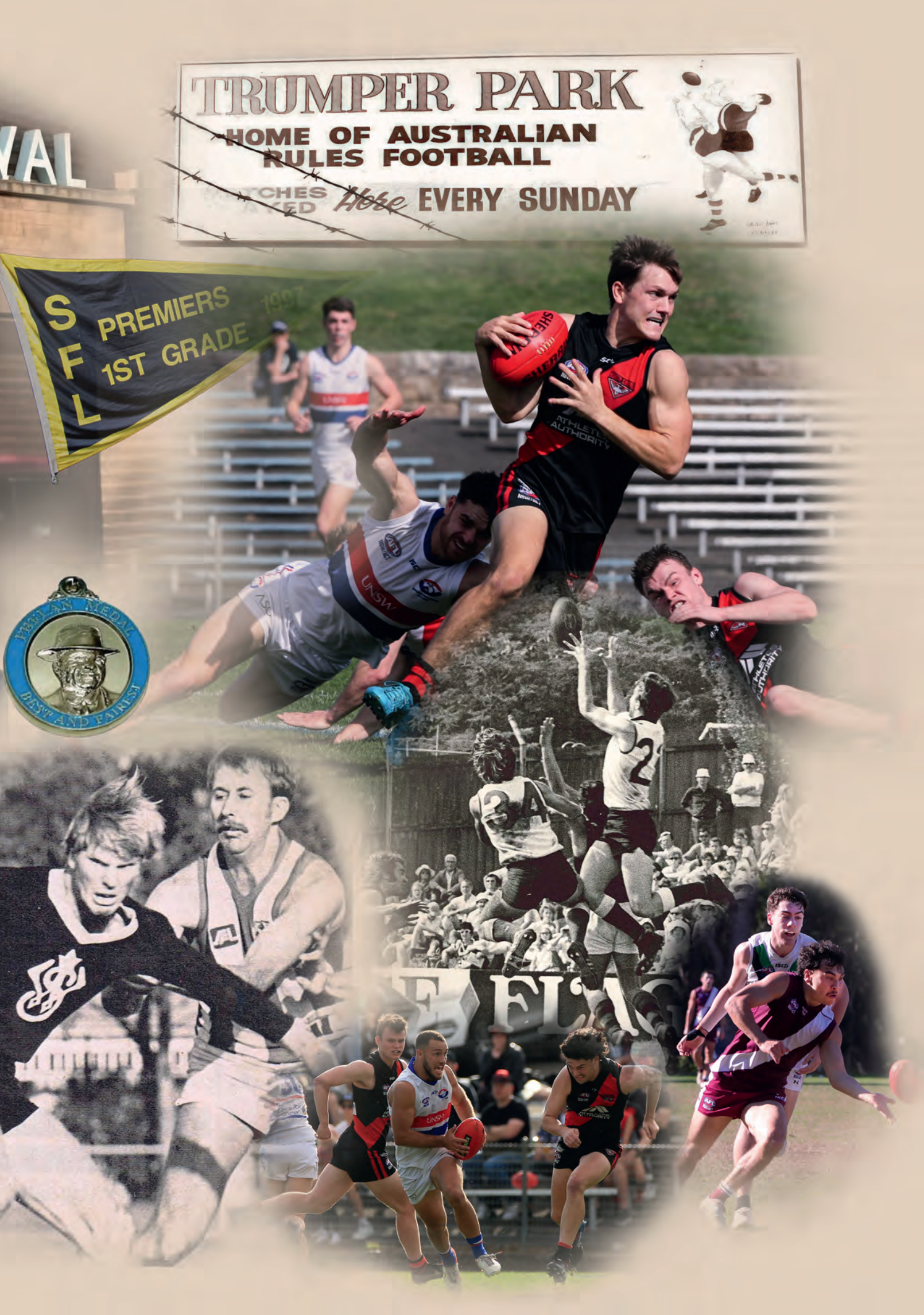
The "home" of Australian football in Sydney. The headquarters of the New South Wales Australian Football League near Central Railway. The League owns this $20,000 building.



The Fine Grandstand of the Australian Football Ground at Alexandria opened on 20 April 1912






TRUMPER PARK
HOME OF AUSTRALIAN RULES FOOTBALL
EVERY SUNDAY
SFL
PREMIERS
1ST GRADE
1997
UNSW
NAB
UNSW

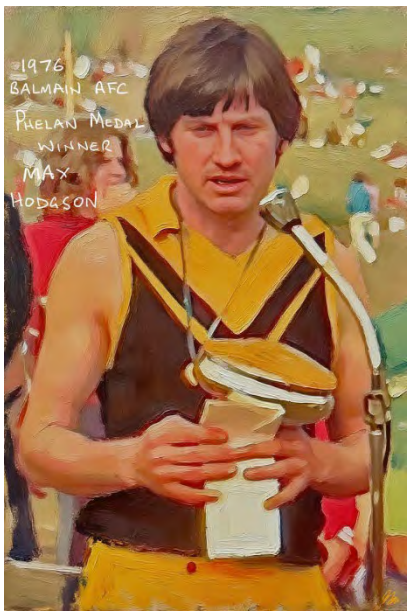
1974 Brian Tyler South Sydney

Back at his original Sydney club, 1969 Phelan Medal winner Brian Tyler won his second medal in 1974.

1975 George Allen Western Suburbs

George Allen, who won the 1973 Phelan Medal, was awarded the medal again in 1975.

1976 Max Hodgson Balmain



Balmain's vice-captain Max Hodgson won the Phelan Medal in 1976. In a poor season for Balmain, he put in a very strong year polling 29 votes. The umpires must have been good judges that year. A separate award called the "Courage Award", sponsored by Courage Breweries, was won by Hodgson with 20 votes. Hodgson, who lived in Melbourne before coming to Sydney, was versatile but generally played in the centre. He played for the Tigers again in 1977 and was the club's leading Phelan Medal performer with 12 votes. In 1978 Hodgson was cleared on loan to East Sydney, before returning to Balmain in 1979 where he played for a further two seasons.

Ian Wright

1977 Dale Dalton St George



Tenacious St George rover Dale Dalton won the Phelan Medal in 1977 with 21 votes. Dalton joined St George in 1966 from WAFL club, Perth. Under the coaching of Col Harris, the Saints made the grand final but went down to Western Suburbs. Dalton played for NSW against North Melbourne in his first season in Sydney. He subsequently represented NSW in six more games and Sydney three times at State Championships. He played over 200 games for St. George between 1966-1977, winning the club's best and fairest award on three occasions, 1966, 1968 and 1974. His best season was in 1977, his last as a player, when he won the club's goal kicking as well as league's top award for best and fairest. Dalton captain coached the first grade team in 1976, and as coach of the Under 19s from 1972-1975 won four premierships in a row. He was vice president from 1991-1993. Dale Dalton became a St. George life member in 1975 and was duly inducted into the Hall of Fame.

John Addison

1978 Jack McCormick Southern Districts



Jack McCormick won the Phelan Medal in 1978 polling 26 votes. Southern Districts, now known as South West Sydney, was based in the Liverpool area and McCormick, from Wakool, served in the army at Holsworthy. He played as a rover and in the forward line. In 1978, his second season at Southern Districts, he kicked 50 goals. McCormick starred in the club's upset round 19 win over 1977 premiers Western Suburbs. The *Sydney Morning Herald* (31 July 1978) reported that, "District's driving force was rover Jack McCormick who finished with five goals including the final goal which gave them victory." Summing up his medal win, the *Football Record* noted, "Jack's form throughout the season constantly brought him to the attention of journalists, commentators and umpires alike." McCormick also won the Courage Award of $1000 given by Courage Breweries to "the most courageous player in the Sydney First Grade Competition." In 1979 he moved to Canberra and was a star player with Ainslie under St Kilda legend Kevin "Cowboy" Neale. Jack McCormick's football career continued in Darwin as both player and coach with St Mary's.

Ian Wright

1979 Rob Claridge East Sydney



Robbie Claridge won the Phelan Medal in 1979 with 21 votes as well as East Sydney's best and fairest award. Claridge began his football with Longford in the NTFA before transferring south in his employment where he played 120 games for Hobart. A move to Sydney to work for the Tasmanian Tourist Bureau in 1975 resulted in him joining East Sydney.

A ruck-rover/centreman Claridge was a key member of Easts' 1976 Premiership team under former South Melbourne and Subiaco goal-kicking ace Austin Robertson. He took on the job as captain-coach in 1978, then became captain under former Fitzroy and Carlton star forward Alex Ruscuklic for the 1979 season. 1980 was East Sydney's centenary season and with the return of Robertson as coach and with Claridge as captain the Bulldogs put the "flag in the bag".

Further premierships followed in 1981 and 1982 with Greg Harris as captain-coach and ruckman Claridge as ruck-rover, Wayne Goss as rover and Jim Richardson in the centre making East Sydney the dominant force in this period. Rob Claridge represented NSW against VFA club Preston in the national club championships in 1978 and also Sydney in the State championships. After Easts he played one season, 1984, with Manuka in the ACTAFL before retiring.

Rod Gillett

President's message

Grand Final 1979 marks the end of a season punctuated with many highlights. And today will be no exception. I know that the spectators at today's Grand Finals will be satisfied to the full with the entertainment value of the games. I congratulate those Clubs participating in each of the three grades and wish them well.

On the field of play there were so many memorable achievements. The outstanding performance of the East Sydney Club to finish the home and away rounds undefeated only to lose their two Finals games. The individual play of such skilful footballers as the Phelan Medal winner, **Robbie Claridge**, the leading goal scorers **Peter Ruscuklic, Wes Preston** and **Graeme McLean** and the professional coaching of **Ian Harry, Alex Ruscuklic** and **John Pitura**. The loyal followers of our Code have much to remember 1979 for.

Football Record, 23 September 1979

1980 John Pilkington Newtown



John Pilkington won the Phelan Medal in 1980 and 1982 as the leading ruckman with the Newtown club, polling 20 votes in 1980 and 19 votes in 1982.

He started his football with Devonport Football club under 19s in the NWFU and quickly progressed to the senior club. After only eight games he quickly drew the attention of VFL club Melbourne where he played in the reserves for a season and a half.

Pilkington joined the Glenorchy Football Club in Hobart in 1974, playing in the Tasmanian Football League. He made an immediate impact in his debut season, finishing runner up in the club's senior best and fairest award. In 1975 Pilkington played under former Hawthorn goalkicking machine Peter Hudson and alongside Rodney Eade. His final season with Glenorchy was 1979 when he won the Most Consistent Player award and attained his 100th club game. He also represented the TANFL against the NTFA.

In 1980 Pilkington moved to Sydney in his work and joined the Newtown club where he played until the end of season 1984. He regarded winning the Phelan Medal in 1980 as a great honour being it was his first season in Sydney football. At the time his coach at Newtown was the Great Sam Kekovich when the Blood-Stained Angels were still a highly competitive team in the Sydney Football League.

It was towards the end of his playing career, and the Phelan Medal win in 1982 provided an incentive to continue playing. This enabled Pilkington to play for NSW against his home state Tasmania in the 1984 Escort Shield match in Hobart.

Ian Parker

1981 Laurie Axford East Sydney



Laurie Axford was a key member of East Sydney's tremendous period of success playing in four consecutive premierships from 1980-84. A physical education specialist, Axford's superior fitness was crucial to his endurance and high performance that won him the Phelan Medal for the 1981 season.

"Wal" began his footy in the Shire with the Cronulla juniors in 1967 then he moved to St George to play Under 19s making his first-grade debut in 1976 under Dale Dalton. A graduate of Port Hacking High School, he took up an offer to study a degree in physical education at the University of Western Australia where he spent two years on West Perth's list.

Returning to Sydney to work in the health rehabilitation sector, Axford signed with East Sydney in 1980 and became a key player in the Bulldogs' dynasty playing as a ruck-rover. He polled 23 votes to win the medal in 1981. Axford received eleven more votes than team-mate Peter Rucuklic who booted a national record 213 goals that season.

His career went the full circle when he returned to play for Sutherland in the 2nd Division in 1984-85 including a grand final in 1984 when the Sharks were beaten by St Ives.

Axford's expertise and football knowledge was harnessed by the Sydney Swans when his services as fitness advisor were secured for the 1990-1992 seasons.

Rod Gillett

1982 John Pilkington Newtown

After first winning the Phelan Medal in 1980 John Pilkington claimed his second medal in 1982.

1983 Rod Podbury Bankstown Sports



Rod Podbury was a 'gun' in the Sydney Football League in the 1980s. He won four Phelan Medals (1983, 1986, 1987, 1990), making him only the second player in the history of Sydney football to achieve that feat. The other four-time Phelan Medallist was Jack Williamson in the 1930s. Podbury was runner-up once (1988) and third on two occasions.

He was a joint winner of the 1983 Phelan Medal, coming home with the last 3 vote of the night to tie with Michael Toy from Pennant Hills on 16 votes. In 1986 he again polled 16 votes but won by a margin of three. He backed that up in 1987 to win consecutive medals, on that occasion with 18 votes. His fourth Phelan Medal followed in 1990, a joint win shared with Michael Davis from Sydney University, both polling 17 votes.

Rod Podbury was born in Ballarat, Victoria, and originally played with Bankstown Sports (1980-1985) alongside his brothers Stephen and Anthony. He was club best and fairest winner in 1982 and 1984. After standing out of football in 1985 due to a clearance dispute, he joined Campbelltown where he had his greatest successes playing in four consecutive premierships from 1986 to 1989.

He was an elusive and very balanced mid-fielder with magical skills. His profile in the *Sydney Football League Grand Final Record* in 1987 described him as:

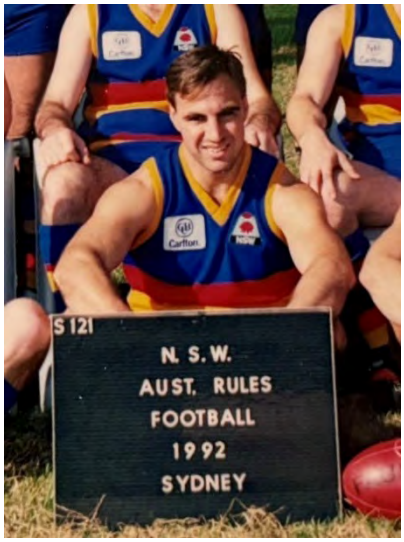
"A highly skilled ball player. Winner of two Phelan Medals who captained the league rep squad in 1987. A talented player who gives the opposition headaches."

Rod Podbury represented NSW on six occasions and was regularly among the state's best players. In the 1984 Escort Shield match against Tasmania he was "in the thick of things all day with his ability to make space for himself." (*Football Record*, 26 May 1984)

In recognition of his legendary impact on the Sydney football competition, the grand final best-on-ground trophy for the Premier Division is officially named the Rod Podbury Medal. Rod Podbury was inducted into the Sydney AFL Hall of Fame in 2003 and the NSW Australian Football Hall of Fame in 2024. He is a life member of the Campbelltown Football Club.

Peter Clark

1983 Michael Toy Pennant Hills



Michael Toy won the 1983 Phelan Medal polling 16 votes in a two-way tie with Rod Podbury (Bankstown Sports Club). Toy started his football career in Sydney with the Pennant Hills Junior AFL club being recruited by none other than Ern Holmes at 10 years of age. His senior debut for Pennant Hills at the age of 16 was in 1979 under coach Bill Thripp and in 1982 and 1983 he won the Pennant Hills "Ern Holmes" trophy, the club's senior best and fairest award. He ultimately played 106 senior games with the club.
Toy then moved to South Australia playing with Glenelg in 1984 and 1985 coached by Graham Cornes.

On returning to Sydney, he played with Pennant Hills again in 1987 before stints at Baulkham Hills (now East Coast Eagles) in seasons 1990 and 1991 under Doug Scholz, winning the clubs best and fairest award and Clubman of the Year in 1990. Toy was captain and coach of Baulkham Hills in 1993 and played a season at Western Suburbs Magpies in 1994 coached by Ron Thomas. He then returned to Baulkham Hills in 1994 before retiring at the season's end.

Ian Parker

PHELAN MEDAL NIGHT

AUGUST 25, EAST RULES CLUB
32 EBLEY ST., BONDI JUNCTION
YOUR CHANCE TO PAY TRIBUTE
TO THE PLAYERS AND FOR CLUBS
TO MINGLE FREELY.
2GB's RICHARD FISK COMPERE
$20-A-HEAD
CONTACT YOUR CLUB IF YOU WANT
TO ATTEND
ENTERTAINMENT AFTER PRESENTATIONS

(*Football Record* 20 August 1983)

1984 Graham Jones Western Suburbs



Graham Jones has the unparalleled feat of winning Phelan Medals eleven years apart. The first one for Western Suburbs in 1984 when he was 23 years old, and the second at age 34 when playing for Baulkham Hills (now known as East Coast Eagles). Jones grew up in Carlingford and was educated at Trinity Grammar where he played in the school's first XV rugby team. He was also one of the first locally produced players to play for the Sydney Swans, albeit only one game.

The dashing, tall, athletic Jones (a champion high jumper at school) also had a reservoir of endurance and could ruck all day. He was also durable and rarely missed games through injury throughout his whole career which spanned from 1979 until 2006.

After starting in West's Under 19s in 1979 and making his senior debut in 1981, Jones had a superlative season in 1984. He played first ruck for his club and represented NSW in the Escort Shield series against Tasmania, Queensland and the ACT. Jones scored 15 votes to win the Phelan Medal by one vote from Adam Harris (Pennant Hills). The Sydney Swans recruited Jones for the next season and after a clearance wrangle and he went on to win the Reserves best and fairest award. He stayed for the 1986 season under new coach Tommy Hafey and finally got a senior game.

Jones moved to Western Australia in 1987 and signed with Subiaco, coached by Hadyn Bunton Jnr., and played for three seasons. What followed next was a stint in the WA country South West League playing for Harvey Brunswick Leschenault. The peripatetic Jones went travelling overseas in 1992. He returned to Sydney in 1993 and played for North Shore. In 1994 Jones was lured to competition newcomer Baulkham Hills. He had another brilliant season in 1995 when he stunned local football circles by winning his second Phelan Medal by polling 22 votes.

Jones returned to Perth in 1996. He linked up with amateur club Scarborough and won the reserves medal in 1997, 1998 and 1999. He finished up in 2006 after playing a season in the Masters.

Graham Jones was a popular figure in his time in Sydney football. He was a very popular team-mate and was highly respected by opponents. And the umpires liked him as well!

Rod Gillett

1985 Frank Gleeson Balmain



In his first year playing for Balmain, Frank Gleeson won the Phelan Medal by nine votes, took out the *Football Record* Player of the Year award, his club's best and fairest award, as well as being runner up in the club's goalkicking with 58 goals.

Gleeson started his junior football with St Marys Greensborough and the Macleod junior football clubs before commencing his senior football career in 1980 at the age of 17 with Old Paradians in the Victorian Amateurs competition. He played for five years at Old Paradians where he won two club best and fairest awards, a leading goal kicker award and represented the VAFA against the VCFL.

In 1985 he transferred employment to NSW and continued his playing career with the Balmain. That year he was selected in the SFL team against the Riverina and the NSW team against the ACT playing in Canberra.

In 1986 he was selected for New South Wales against Tasmania, but mid-year was transferred back to Melbourne through employment and recommenced his football career with Old Paradians.

Simon Kelly

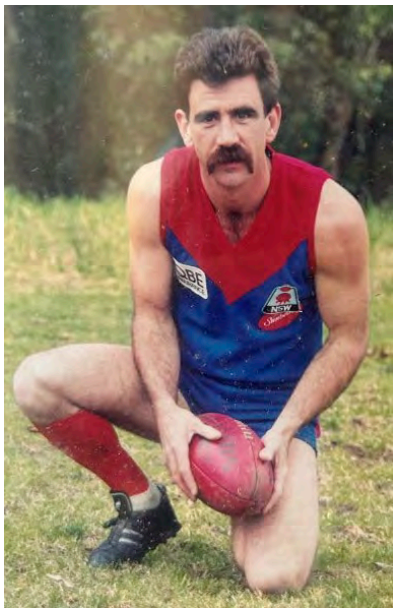
1986 Rod Podbury Campbelltown

In 1986 Rod Podbury, playing for Campbelltown, won his second Phelan Medal.

1987 Rod Podbury Campbelltown

Rod Podbury, winner of the 1983 and 1986 Phelan Medals, won the award for a third time in 1987.

1988 Gary Spillane Pennant Hills



Gary Spillane of Pennant Hills won the 1988 Phelan Medal, polling 21 votes. He learned his football as a junior in Queensland before making his senior debut in 1973 at the age of 17 for Coorparoo for whom he went on to play 170 senior games. In Queensland he won best and fairest awards and represented his state. Moving to Sydney in 1983 Spillane joined Pennant Hills and played as a half forward and midfielder. In 1984 he won the Ern Holmes Trophy, the club's senior best and fairest award.

In 1988, besides winning the Phelan Medal, he was captain and coach of the club and was awarded Pennant Hills Footballer of the Year, now known as the Chris Yard Trophy. Spillane again won the Ern Holmes Trophy in 1990 and in 1991. He ultimately played 139 senior games with the club and was made a life member in 1991. Gary Spillane represented NSW in interstate fixtures eight times.

Ian Parker

1989 Michael Porta Holroyd-Parramatta



Michael "Nudge" Porta won the Phelan Medal in 1989, his first year in Sydney, which was an outstanding performance considering the club only won a handful of games that season. He polled 17 votes, two ahead of Rob Trkula of Western Suburbs. Porta joined Holroyd-Parramatta from the powerful Ainslie FC in the ACTAFL. A fleet footed left footer who could play many positions, it was across half back that he made a name for himself at the Goannas. Although small in stature and only lightly built, he was as tough as nails, had a never-say-die attitude, speed to burn and a huge tank. On the training track he drove standards; he trained like he played. Michael Porta played in Holroyd-Parramatta's 1990 Premiership team and was a member of the 1991 Grand Final team. He represented the Sydney Football League during 1989-1991.

Terry Kennedy

1990 Michael Davis Sydney University



Dr Michael Davis is a great tale of a devoted clubman working his way through the grades at the Sydney University Australian National Football Club to achieve Sydney football's greatest personal accolade sharing the 1990 Phelan Medal with Rod Podbury on 17 votes.

From Broken Hill, Davis relished a return to Australian Rules after his schooling at the rugby factory of St Joseph's College, Hunters Hill. He started in the varsity's under 20s in 1985, quickly worked his way into first grade and started on the interchange bench in the club's 1986 SDFA grand final winning side. Davis was an established midfield gun in the following year's premiership side and when Sydney University was promoted to the SFL in 1988 he was right at home in the top division, a centreman who was skilled on both sides of the body and just knew how to find the footy.

But Davis was just as good off the field - among his many roles helping run the footy club he was a committee man and club secretary. He managed to combine an exceptional 1990 season of footy with 60 hours a week of medical studies, working in a bar and an active social life. Davis was a regular selection in the Australian Universities team in the late 1980s and was awarded a University Blue in 1988.

Paul Mulvey

1990 Rod Podbury Campbelltown

In 1990 Rod Podbury won his fourth Phelan Medal (he also won the award in 1983, 1986 and 1987) and joined Jack Williamson as the only other player to achieve the feat.

1991 David West St George



David West, who won the Phelan Medal in 1991 with 22 votes, played 152 games with St. George over 10 years. He played in a variety of positions, ruck, wing, centre half back and centre half forward. In previewing the medal count, the *Football Record* suggested that "…David West may be the one. As a big man he attracts a lot of notice, but so would his mobility and skill. He dominated most of the rucks this year." West played in the premiership side in 1993 and represented NSW against Tasmania, Queensland and the ACT, including one memorable game at fullback in which he kicked a goal on Warwick Capper! He became a life member of St. George in 1995, being recognised for his long-standing service, loyalty and impact. Known for his dedication and preparation, David West maintained one unique pre-game superstition, completing a 2-3 km run before each game. It must have worked.

John Addison

1992 Lee Campbell Campbelltown



Lee Campbell, originally from Stawell in country Victoria, was a joint winner of the 1992 Phelan Medal sharing the award with Darren Oates of St George, both polling 19 votes. Campbell was a physical training instructor in the army when he played for Campbelltown. He was a strong, robust mid-fielder/half-forward who ran hard and fast. Campbell played with the Sydney Swans Under 19s in 1991 before rejoining the Campbelltown Blues. He was a leading player in Campbelltown's 1994 and 1995 premiership teams. Linking up with Balmain from 1997-2001, Campbell was a key figure in the 1997 and 1998 premierships. He then transferred to Wests for the 2002 season. In representative football he played for NSW against Queensland in 1992 at the SCG. In recent years Campbell has been playing and coaching the Woden Blues to success in the ACT.

Peter Clark

1992 Darren Oates St George

For the second time in three seasons, the umpires couldn't separate the SFL's best and fairest players with a Phelan Medal tie to Campbclltown's Lee Campbell and St George's Darren Oates on 19 votes. The 20-year-olds were a long way ahead of the rest of the field, with four-time winner Rod Podbury third on 12 votes. Even if the countback system applied, Campbell and Oates would have still tied, both receiving five best on ground votes, a two vote and two singles. Oates arrived at St George a few weeks into the season unfit. He came to the Saints from Melbourne with a big reputation after winning the Eastern Districts League Under 18s best and fairest and runner up for the seniors the following year. He had also represented Melbourne Metropolitan Under 19s. His return to fitness and form in the centre coincided with the Saints' seven game winning streak which almost had them in the finals. He was also selected in the Sydney Team of the Year on the wing, with his team-mate and fellow Phelan Medallist Tony Quinn on the other wing.

John Addison

1993 Tony Quinn St George



Tony Quinn won the 1993 Phelan Medal with 20 votes and captained a premiership team for St. George, breaking a 29 year drought for the club. He initially played junior rugby league, and commenced his junior football with Sutherland progressing to senior football with St. George. Over a 14 year period he played 211 games, firstly as a wingman and later as a half back flanker. The popular Quinn was inducted into the AFL Sydney and also St. George Halls of Fame. He was awarded life membership of St George in 1995. Tony Quinn returned to the club in 2018 when his youngest son started playing and spent five seasons coaching, including four years as senior coach.

John Addison

1994 Chris O'Dwyer East Sydney



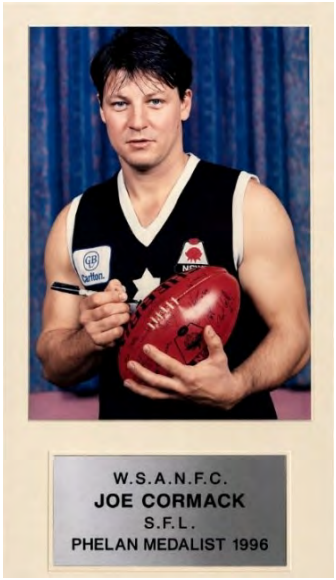
Chris O'Dwyer stepped straight out of AFL football to play for East Sydney and in the process became one of the leading players in the Sydney competition in the 1990s. The boy from Barooga playing in the centre won the Phelan Medal with 28 votes in 1994. O'Dwyer came to Sydney in 1990 from Assumption College Kilmore to play in the Under 19s for the Swans. He played eight senior games for the Swans across the 1991-92 seasons and after not playing a senior game in 1993 was drafted by Carlton. However, he decided to remain in Sydney due to employment opportunities and went to Easts. Returning to the Swans in 1995, O'Dwyer played in the reserves grand final team that lost to North Melbourne. He returned to East Sydney in 1996 and had another outstanding season finishing runner up to Joe Cormack by two votes for the Phelan Medal. O'Dwyer took on the coaching role at Easts in 1997-98. By the time he retired in 2000 he had played 168 games and won four club best and fairest awards. Chris O'Dwyer was inducted into the AFL Sydney Hall of Fame in 2009.

Rod Gillett

1995 Graham Jones Baulkham Hills

The 1984 Phelan Medal winner, Graham Jones, won his second award in 1995.

1996 Joe Cormack Western Suburbs



Joe Cormack, the 1996 Phelan Medal winner, had a distinguished career in Western Australia playing 61 games for Swan Districts. He also played for the West Coast Eagles (10 games), Claremont (21 games) and Fitzroy (26 games). He was a member of the Western Australian State of Origin Team at the 1988 Bicentennial Carnival in Adelaide.

Cormack won the Phelan Medal by polling in 10 matches earning a tally of 21 votes. According to the *Football Record* he was "often providing the engine-room thrust for Wests." He won best on ground votes on five occasions, and this proved pivotal as he pipped East Sydney's Chris O'Dwyer by just two votes for the award. Joe Cormack played in Western Suburbs Premiership side in 1996.

Miles Wilks

1997 Simon Wilson St George



Simon Wilson won the Phelan Medal in 1997 with a tally of 16 votes. He came to Sydney from the Wagga Tigers and played with three SFL clubs over his career after a short stint with the Sydney Swans. A rover who loved to run, he played with Western Suburbs in 1991-1992 before moving to St. George in 1993 where he was a member of the club's 1993 Premiership team. Wilson returned to Wagga for two seasons and won two premierships with the Tigers coached by Terry Daniher. After coming back to Sydney he coached St George from 1998-2000. Between 2001 and 2004 he coached and played with North Shore, appearing in four consecutive grand finals and winning premierships in 2001 and 2004. Wilson was inducted into the AFL Sydney Hall of Fame in 2010.

Simon Wilson started work with AFL NSW-ACT in 2005 and was instrumental in the development of the Independent Schools competition. He is currently the Growth and Experience manager overseeing training programs for coaches and umpires.

John Addison

1998 Jarrod Crosby Baulkham Hills



Jarrod Crosby won the 1998 Phelan Medal with 22 votes. It was a great victory for Crosby considering the Falcons finished the year with the wooden spoon. He started his career in 1988 with the Baulkham Hills juniors before making his senior debut aged 15. In 1991 he played for the Swans Under 19s team under the coaching of Greg Harris. In 1995 he played with Box Hill in the VFL Reserves and in 1997 with Subiaco in the WAFL Reserves. He returned to Baulkham Hills and won the club best and fairest award in 1998 and 1999; he ultimately played 133 games for the club. Crosby transferred to North Shore in 2002 where he won the club best and fairest award in 2002 and 2006 and played in their 2004, 2005 and 2007 Premiership teams. In the 2005 Grand Final he was awarded the Rod Podbury Medal for best on ground. Over his career with both Sydney clubs, Crosby was named in the AFL Sydney Team of the Year on four occasions and was a representative team member in eight games. In 2011 he was inducted into the AFL Sydney Hall of Fame.

Ian Parker

1999 Trevor Burnett Campbelltown



Trevor Burnett won the 1999 Phelan Medal with 34 votes, the third highest in the history of the medal. His memorable 1999 season included captaining Campbelltown to a premiership and winning the Rod Podbury Medal as best on ground in the grand final. Burnett commenced his career playing junior football at Barham before moving to Wollongong where he played in the premiership sides of 1987-1988. He was captain of Wollongong in 1991 while playing in the Sydney Football Association Division 1 when won the Snow Medal. In 1992 he moved to Campbelltown where he played for nine years, including the premiership years of 1994, 1995 and 1999. He was club best and fairest in 1995, 1996, 1998 and 1999 and was captain from 1997 to 2000. Returning to play with Wollongong in 2001, he won two more Snow Medals. Burnett was selected in many representative teams and had a significant post-playing coaching career. He was inducted into the AFL Sydney Hall of Fame in 2011.

Ian Parker

2000 Mark Mackenzie Balmain



In 2000, Mark Mackenzie claimed the Phelan Medal with 19 votes, edging out runners-up Simon Webb and Jarrod Crosby, who both finished on 17 votes. Mackenzie always believed football would play an important part of his life, but his junior sporting life was a mixture of football, soccer, basketball, cricket and water skiing. He was recruited to the Melbourne Football Club from Melbourne High School in 1991. He only played in the U19s and a couple of reserve games before being delisted. After playing for Springvale in the VFA he travelled overseas for two years before relocating to Sydney.

In the SFL he played firstly with North Shore but was soon lured to Balmain where he played from 1999-2004, with his breakout season being in 2000. As well as winning the Phelan Medal, he took out the club best and fairest award and played for Sydney against Riverina. In that season he also represented NSW at the National Carnival playing in the winning team against Victoria Country. He had such a great carnival he was picked in the All-Australian Team. In 2004 Mackenzie moved to Adelaide and played for Hamley Bridge in the Adelaide Plains League helping them win the premiership.

Simon Kelly

2001 Jason McPherson UNSW-ES



Jason McPherson was a brilliant on-baller with superb skills and a high footy IQ who could find the ball hence his propensity to attract best and fairest votes from the umpires. He won the Phelan Medal in 2001, tallying 16 votes, and finished third in 2002. McPherson started his footy journey at Ganmain-Grong Grong-Matong in 1993. The son of Ganmain 1976 Premiership star Trevor McPherson, Jason was selected in the 1998 AFL Rookie Draft by the Sydney Swans. After playing approximately 40 reserves games for the Swans, he joined University of NSW-Eastern Suburbs in 2000. He captained the club to a premiership in 2003. In 2004 he joined Western Suburbs and coached the Magpies in 2005 and 2006 leading the club to the finals in both years. McPherson also represented NSW on four occasions including the team which won the Australian Country Championships in 2002. He gained selection in the All-Australian team. Jason was inducted into the AFL Sydney Hall of Fame in 2012.

Rod Gillett

2002 Troy Luff Balmain



Troy Luff is mostly renowned for his career with the Sydney Swans which spanned from 1990-2001. He was well regarded as a utility player who could take a strong contested mark. Prior to his time at the Swans, he started his senior football journey with the Nelson Bay Marlins on the mid-north NSW coast. After dominating in that competition, he was selected by the Swans where he held onto his spot … just. In the years Kinnear, Buckenara and Barassi were coaches (1990-95), Luff never played more than 11 games in a season, but in Rodney Eade's first year in charge, Luff shot up to playing 23 games for the red and the whites.

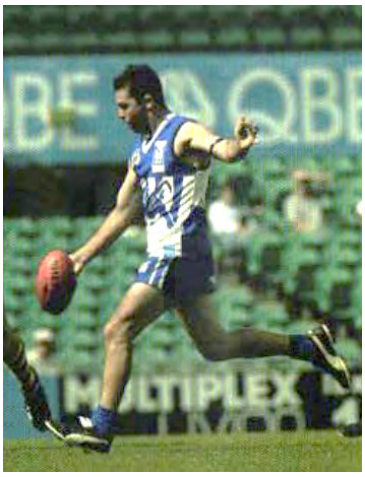
He was a revelation in the 1996 Grand Final where he dominated against the big name Wayne Schwass. Luff took a series of telling marks and kicked two goals before Schwass was taken off Luff and given another defensive match-up. Unfortunately for the Swans, and Luff, the match turned North Melbourne's way and that premiership opportunity slipped. Luff continued to contribute to the Swans' cause up until his career ended as a 31-year-old with 155 games to his name.

Troy Luff's time in Sydney football is remarkable. There simply has not been a Sydney Swans player who after their AFL career has given back to the local Sydney football as a player as much as Troy Luff. There have been contributions of note such as Rod Carter coaching Sydney University to premiership success and Craig O'Brien playing for St George as two examples, but Luff's longevity of input is remarkable.

In his first year after leaving the Swans, in 2002, he played for Balmain and won the Phelan Medal tallying 20 votes. In 2006, with University of NSW-Eastern Suburbs, he won his second Phelan Medal recording 21 votes. He garnered most media attention for his time in Sydney football by breaking through for a premiership victory on his 11th attempt. The *Daily Telegraph* led with the article heading of "Flag Drought Over: 11th Time Lucky for Luff" after he represented the University of NSW-Eastern Suburbs team in 2019 and won the Division 2 title. The previous ten attempts had resulted in grand final losses. With over 600 games of senior football spanning 24 seasons, the final words are left to Luff, "It's a game I just love playing".

Miles Wilks

2003 Jason Turner Campbelltown



Campbelltown midfielder Jason Turner won the 2003 Phelan Medal with 15 votes, one ahead of North Shore on-baller Simon Webb. He claimed the medal after a three-vote performance in the last round of the season. Turner, who grew up in Bathurst, played with the NSWACT Rams Talented Player Program and later tried his luck interstate with South Adelaide. He played seven reserves games for the Panthers before returning home to Sydney in 2003 to play with the Campbelltown Kangaroos. The goal kicking onballer was described in the *Football Record* (20 September 2003) as "a strong, powerful and fast player who opposition teams find hard to match-up."

Peter Clark

2004 Stephen Pech UNSW-ES



Stephen Pech won the 2004 Phelan Medal with 19 votes from Benjamin McNamara of the East Coast Eagles. After playing school football with Immanuel College in Adelaide, he started in the juniors at SANFL club North Adelaide. At 18, after a full year playing in the reserves, he was approached about listing for the AFL Draft and Rookie Draft and completed a part preseason with Port Adelaide in their inaugural year. After completing university, he moved overseas and played in London with the West London Wildcats and then in Singapore for the Wombats.

Pech moved to Sydney at the end of the 2003 season and joined his brother Andre at UNSW-Eastern Suburbs in 2004. He was selected in the NSW team that played in the Australian Country Championships held in Bunbury, West Australia, gaining selection in the All-Australian Team at the conclusion of the carnival. Pech played several seasons for the Bulldogs as vice-captain in 2005 under Troy Luff, and co-captain in 2006. In 2022 he was selected as ruck in the UNSW-Eastern Suburbs team of 2000-2020. Stephen Pech moved back to his hometown of Adelaide and played with the Blackwood Football Club winning his first premiership as a player in 2012.

Ian Parker

2005 Dean Davies North Shore



Dean Davies won the 2005 Phelan Medal with 22 votes from Barnaby Howarth of Pennant Hills on 16 votes. Paul Gambale of Western Suburbs, who polled 24 votes, was deemed ineligible for the award. Davies played in the North Shore Bombers team that won the premiership in 2005 by defeating Western Suburbs. He was successful in being awarded the North Shore best and fairest award; a great result given it was in a premiership team. Davies also shared the AFL Sydney Rising Star award for season 2005 with team-mate Marc Lord. He represented AFL Sydney in a representative game against AFL Queensland Division 2 and was named in the best players for that game.

Ian Parker

2006 Troy Luff UNSW-ES

2002 Phelan Medal winner Troy Luff won his second award in 2006.

2007 Charlie Richardson Pennant Hills



Charlie Richardson won the 2007 Phelan Medal with 16 votes from another Pennant Hills player in Alastair Richardson. He made his senior debut with Pennant Hills at age 17. In 2006 Richardson won his first of his two senior premierships at Pennant Hills. That was backed up by another premiership in 2008.

Looking for a higher level of footy and a return to his family roots, he transferred to Melbourne in 2010 where he played more than 150 games with University Blacks in the VAFA. During his time at the Blacks Richardson won another senior premiership in 2012 where he was also awarded best on ground in the grand final. In that same year, he won his second league best and fairest, polling the most votes in the GT Moore Medal. Over the course of his career, Charlie Richardson played senior representative football for both AFL Sydney and the VAFA.

Ian Parker

2008 Matt Carey Pennant Hills



Matt Carey won the 2008 Phelan Medal with 17 votes from Alex Lee of Sydney University who polled 16 votes. Carey started out in the juniors with East Gambier and moved to Sydney at an early age where he played with Westbrook juniors. After joining the Pennant Hills Under 18s team in 2003, Carey played in the premiership team and followed that up in 2004 by kicking 133 goals. His debut with the senior club was in 2005. He achieved significant success in his career winning the Ern Holmes trophy for Premier Division best and fairest and twice being named Pennant Hills Footballer of the Year. He stands alone as the only player at Pennant Hills to have played in four Premier Division flags, in 2006 and 2008 and as co-captain, and in 2015 and 2017. Matt Carey has also represented AFL Sydney eight times, twice as captain, as well as being chosen three times in the AFL Sydney Team of the Year.

Ian Parker

2009 Brydon Coles Sydney University



Mature and professional beyond his years, Brydon Coles was Sydney University's vice-captain in 2009 at the age of 19, an appointment that was vindicated with his on-field brilliance. He won the Phelan Medal with 19 votes after polling two in the final round to win by one vote from Pennant Hills' Alastair Richardson. A Pennant Hills and Willoughby junior, Coles started his senior career as a 17-year-old at North Shore in 2006 before heading to Uni in 2008 where he made an immediate impact despite his youth. After winning the Phelan Medal at 20, the classy midfielder set off to develop his footy, playing for Geelong West in 2010, followed by a handful of games at Williamstown in the VFL. Upon returning to Sydney he went to Campbelltown and then to the merged South West Sydney club. Sixteen years after his medal win, Coles was still having an impact on Sydney footy, having played a crucial role as a veteran player and coach to help South West Sydney's revival and emergence as a force in Sydney's Premier Division.

Paul Mulvey

2010 Alex Lee Sydney University



Otherwise known as 'The Fave', Alex Lee was not just a crowd favourite. The umpires obviously thought a lot of the classy left footer as well. Runner-up in the 2008 Phelan Medal by one vote, he saluted in 2010 with 19 votes, two ahead of Sydney University team-mate Ben Mankarious and St George's Declan Donohue. Lee came to Sydney in 2008 from Perth where he played with East Fremantle. He had a commerce degree under his belt and a career in financial planning ahead of him. Lee naturally landed at Sydney University and immediately made his mark as a stocky but silky onballer and goalkicking forward who quickly became a club favourite as he racked up possessions in style. He was appointed club captain and led the Students in their transition to the NEAFL in 2012. Alex Lee retired after the 2012 season to concentrate on his burgeoning business having left an indelible mark at SUANFC.

Paul Mulvey

2011 Kieran Wright Pennant Hills



Kieran Wright won the 2011 Phelan Medal with 20 votes after coming to the club in 2006 as a mature-age player. Wright had a background in soccer but also a natural aptitude and flair for Australian Football. In an illustrious footy career, he was twice Pennant Hills Footballer of the Year and Premier Division best and fairest in 2010 and 2011. Wright is by far the most decorated player at the club. He has won three premiership medals, two in Premier Division, and was best on ground in the 2018 Premier Division Reserves Grand Final. All up, he has won the Pennant Hills Footballer of the Year twice, two League Medals and eight best and fairest awards across most of the grades. Wright was selected in the AFL Sydney Team of the Year on seven occasions (2009–2015) and played representative football between 2008 and 2012. In 2026 Wright played his 350th game with Pennant Hills.

Ian Parker

2012 Dane Rampe UNSW-ES



UNSW-Eastern Suburbs Bulldogs' 22-year-old Dane Rampe won the Phelan Medal in 2012. Polling six best on ground performances in the 2012 season, he finished with 26 votes, six votes ahead of 2011 Phelan Medallist Kieran Wright. Rampe represented AFL Sydney in the representative fixture against the Victorian Amateurs and was named as best player. He was also selected as an All-Australian squad member at the Australian Country Football Championships.

Rampe started with the Bulldogs in 2007 and after two years went to Williamstown in the VFL from 2009 to 2011. His AFL career began in 2013 with the Sydney Swans playing 23 games in that season. Rampe was named in the AFL All-Australian team in 2016, as well as winning the best and fairest for the Swans in 2019. He served as the co-captain from 2019-2023. As of season 2026 Dane Rampe continues to be a leader of the Swans team and culture.

Steve Walliss

2013 Tyrone Armitage Manly Warringah



Manly Warringah captain Tyrone Armitage was awarded the Phelan Medal in 2013 tallying 23 votes. Armitage hailed from the Forest Lions Junior AFL Club on the northern beaches. He was Manly's best and fairest in 2009 and Snow Medal winner in 2009. As captain of Manly in 2012, he led the Division One side to an undefeated premiership and finished runner up in the best and fairest. Armitage was also named in the 2013 AFL Sydney Team of the Year. In 2014 he was a participant in 'The Recruit', a *Fox TV* show aimed at selecting future AFL players. In 2015 he played with the Northern Blues in the VFL before spending 2016 with St Albans in the Western Region Football League (Vic). In 2020 and 2021 he played for the Broadbeach Cats in the QAFL, winning the premiership with the Cats in 2021.

Steve Walliss

2014 Alex Goodall Pennant Hills



Alex Goodall won the 2014 Phelan Medal recording 28 votes from Tyrone Armitage of Manly with 23 votes. Goodall started his AFL career at Westbrook Juniors AFL club in 1996 where he played 156 games. His senior debut for Pennant Hills was in 2007. Goodall won the "Ern Holmes Trophy" for Pennant Hills best and fairest in 2008, 2012 and 2014, and was also named Pennant Hills Footballer of the Year in 2014. He was selected in AFL Sydney representative teams in seasons 2008, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 and named in the AFL Sydney Team of the Year in 2007, 2008, 2012, 2013 and 2014. After his stellar season in 2014, Goodall was offered an opportunity to play with the Albury Tigers in the Ovens and Murray League. Over three seasons with the Tigers he played more than 50 games and was a two-time premiership player, winning consecutive premierships in 2015 and 2016.

Ian Parker

2015 Connor Pettersson Manly Warringah



Connor Pettersson won the 2015 Phelan Medal with 24 votes. He began playing football with the Forest Lions juniors on Sydney's northern beaches and first played for Manly Wolves in 2007. Pettersson spent two seasons with Ainslie in 2008 and 2009, with a further two seasons with Southport in 2010 and 2011.

His most memorable moment of playing in Sydney was the 2013 Premiership with Manly Warringah after they were promoted to the Premier Division that year. Pettersson notes that the biggest influences on his career were his father Scott, and his Manly coach Leigh Brain. It is notable that he finished second in the medal count in 2014 by one vote, before winning in 2015. In both years he played only 13 games.

Steve Walliss

2016	Jack Dimery	East Coast Eagles		



Jack Dimery won the 2016 Phelan Medal as the best and fairest player in the AFL Sydney Men's Premier Division, recording 17 votes. Season 2016 was a breakout year for Dimery and he was a member of the successful East Coast Eagles premiership team. He is a local Sydney player who has developed his career within the Sydney competitions and various AFL Sydney representative teams. Dimery commenced his football career in Auskick with the Baulkham Hills Falcons. His standout performances in the East Coast Eagles Under 18 program earned him a NSW Scholarship with Geelong. He notched up over 250 games for the Eagles during his nine years at the club, including four premierships and a cameo on reality TV show *The Recruit*. Season 2017 saw Dimery wearing the blue and gold for Sydney University playing in the NEAFL competition. He was no stranger to that league having played 54 games with East Coast Eagles and as a top-up player with the GWS Giants from 2012 to 2014. Jack is currently playing with the Parramatta Goannas in the AFL Sydney Men's Division One competition.

Ian Parker

PHELAN MEDAL

The Phelan Medal is awarded to the AFL Sydney Premier Division player judged as the best and fairest in a season on votes of the field umpires who cast 3, 2 & 1 votes at the completion of each game.



2017 Shaun Crane North Shore



Western Australian Shaun Crane became the eighth player to win consecutive Phelan Medals after claiming the award in both 2017 and 2018.

Crane arrived in Sydney in 2017 fresh from a premiership with South Bunbury in the South West Football League, WA. The talented and charismatic midfielder played three seasons with North Shore (2017-2019) before returning home to the west with his young family. In 2017 Crane won the medal with 15 votes, two ahead of Manly Wolves' Cal D'Souza. He backed that up the following year when he was a runaway winner of the award with 29 votes after a dominant season with the Bombers. Team-mate Kyle Devlin was second on 20 votes.

Reflecting on his time in Sydney, Crane said, "To be completely honest it was the most enjoyable and challenging three years of footy I have had. I was fortunate enough to join a club with a fantastic group of people in a professional yet fun culture, with a genuine desire for success."

Shaun Crane will be remembered in Sydney football circles as a hard running player who worked tirelessly in his midfield role and one who possessed high level skills with both hand and foot. He was regarded by North Shore as a great role model who provided exemplary leadership to his team and young players coming through. In 2019 his leadership was recognised by the club when he was chosen as one of three vice captains.

Upon his return to the South Bunbury Tigers in late 2019 he was awarded the inaugural Syd Jackson-Max McGuire Medal as best-on-ground in the annual Jackson McGuire Cup match between the South Bunbury Tigers and the Bunbury Bulldogs. Crane has also represented the South West League (WA) on multiple occasions and was captain in 2024.

Peter Clark

2018 Shaun Crane North Shore

Shaun Crane won consecutive Phelan Medals in 2017 and 2018

2019 Ranga Ediriwickrama Pennant Hills



Ranga Ediriwickrama won the 2019 Phelan Medal with 16 votes. He was a convert from soccer and started football in the U12s at Westbrook juniors before joining Pennant Hills Under 18s in 2006. In his debut season for Pennant Hills seniors in 2007, he also played with the Sydney Swans Reserves and was awarded an AFL Scholarship with Geelong. 2008 was also another outstanding year for Ediriwickrama; he captained NSW/ACT to the national Under 18 Division 2 championships, earned All Australian Under 18 honours, and was a member of Pennant Hills premiership team. He topped it off by being elevated to the Geelong rookie list. Prospects for a senior AFL debut during 2009 were looking bright but a hamstring injury meant that he was only able to play a handful of VFL games with the Geelong Reserves. Further injury resulted in more than 80 weeks of his time at the club on the sidelines. It took him 10 years, but in 2019 it was Ranga's turn to take out the Phelan Medal. This capped off a long stretch of consistent, high-performance football ranking him amongst the best in the league over an extended period. Over the previous five seasons, Ediriwickrama finished in the top 10 of Phelan Medal vote-getters on four occasions.

Ian Parker

2020 Jake Bartholomaeus Sydney University



The son of St George and Western Suburbs great and Swans four-gamer Grant, Jake Bartholomaeus is a Sydney born and bred success. A Maroubra junior, Bartholomaeus has been well travelled in his senior footy, playing three years at UNSW-Eastern Suburbs, including one for the Giants' NEAFL team in 2017, before joining Sydney University's NEAFL adventure the following year. An exciting and highly skilled midfielder, he was one of the NEAFL's genuine A-graders, winning the NEAFL MVP Award in 2019. In the Covid interrupted season of 2020, and with Uni back in the SFL, Bartholomaeus stuck with the Students and made the most of the truncated nine-game season, picking up 16 votes to win the Phelan Medal four votes ahead of Errol Gulden. He capped it off with a flag in Sydney University's triumph over archrivals UNSW-Eastern Suburbs. Jake Bartholomaeus then spent the next five seasons with the Swans Reserves in the VFL with the occasional guest appearance for Uni until landing at Parramatta in 2026.

Paul Mulvey

2021	In 2021 the Phelan Medal was not awarded

2022	Noah Casalini	St George		



Noah Casalini was one of four joint winners of the 2022 Phelan Medal, sharing the award with Mitchell Conn (University of NSW- Eastern Suburbs), Jake Veale (North Shore) and Stephen Wray (Pennant Hills), all on 11 votes. The leading vote-getter with 19 votes was North Shore's Ned Campbell, who was ineligible due to a suspension during the season.

He commenced his junior football for Bankstown in 2015 and then played for Penshurst in 2016-2017. Casalini travelled the well-worn pathway to St. George and played several Under 19 games in his final year in juniors. He won the Kealy Medal for the competition's best and fairest in the Under 19 division in 2018.

Casalini made his senior football debut for St. George in 2019. As well as his Phelan Medal, his honours in Sydney football included winning the Premier Division goal kicking award in 2020. He also played several games with the Sydney Swans and the Giants NEAFL teams as well as their VFL sides along the way. Casalini then transferred to play with North Adelaide in the SANFL from 2023-2025, playing 25 games and kicking 35 goals. In 2026 he moved to the Gold Coast to play for Southport in the VFL.

John Addison

2022 Mitchell Conn UNSW-ES



In addition to being in a four-way tie for the 2022 Phelan Medal, Mitch Conn franked a "quadie" of medals by also winning the Rod Podbury Medal for best on the ground in the AFL Sydney Grand Final, the Jack Dean Medal for club best and fairest and a premiership medal. This was a unique achievement by the robust mid-fielder in his only season in Sydney football.

Conn, who came to UNSW-Eastern Suburbs from Sunbury in the Ballarat Football Netball League, had a standout season in 2022 marked by his consistency and ferocious attack on the football. The following season he moved to Queensland to play for the Noosa Tigers in AFLQ.

Rod Gillett

2022 Jake Veale North Shore



Jake Veale was also one of the four recipients of the Phelan Medal in 2022. A running half back or winger with endurance and elite kicking skills, Veale commenced his distinguished career with the Willoughby juniors and played his first senior game for North Shore at age 15. Under the AFL's scholarship scheme, he joined the Sydney Swans in 2016 and played in the reserves. Veale also represented NSW/ACT in the Under 18s and the Allies at the national championships. He moved to Adelaide to play at his father Rob's former club Sturt in the SANFL in 2017 where he became a premiership player. Returning to Sydney in 2019 he took up a sporting scholarship at Sydney University and played in the club's NEAFL team. After Covid, Veale rejoined North Shore as captain in 2021. Subsequently, he played in North Shore's 2024-2025 premiership triumphs. Jake Veale stamped his class at the representative level leading combined Sydney/Canberra to victories over Tasmania in 2024-25, and Queensland Country in 2026 when he was also named best player.

Rod Gillett

2022 Stephen Wray Pennant Hills



Stephen Wray was also part of the four-way tie for the 2022 Phelan Medal. A talented junior, Wray played 130 games at Westbrook including three premierships and two best and fairest awards. He was the only player from NSW to be selected in the All Australian Under 15 schoolboys' team in 2009. After the championships Wray accepted a 3-year scholarship at the Sydney Swans. Between 2010 and 2014, he was a member of the Swans Academy. In 2014, his first full season with Pennant Hills, Wray was the leading goalkicker with 45 goals and was named in the AFL Sydney Team of the Year.

Wray has played in four grand finals for the Demons, winning premierships in 2015 and 2017. He has also been a regular player in AFL Sydney representative teams in recent years. In 2022 he was Pennant Hills Footballer of the Year and was selected in the AFL Sydney Team of the Year, ten years after his first selection in 2014.

Ian Parker

2023 Harry Maguire Pennant Hills



Harry Maguire won the 2023 Phelan Medal with 18 votes. He started his football career at Pennant Hills juniors, playing 57 games and was Under 17 competition best and fairest player in 2017. His other achievements included playing with the 2017 Under 16 Swans Academy and the Under 16 NSW/ACT Rams.

Maguire's senior debut for Pennant Hills was at age 17 in 2018. He was a member of the 2018 Premier Division Reserves Premiership side. Playing at full forward in the Premier Division senior team he was the club's leading goal kicker in 2023 with 57 goals. Maguire was also selected in the 2018 AFL Sydney Team of the Year in the forward pocket. Looking for a higher level of football, Harry Maguire was recruited by Port Melbourne in 2024, and in 2025 and 2026 he played with Werribee Tigers in the VFL.

Ian Parker

2023 Ned Campbell North Shore



Born and bred on the North Shore, Ned Campbell won Phelan Medals in 2023 and 2024 and topped the count in 2022 when ruled ineligible due to suspension. A strong, talented and very determined mid-fielder, he has been at the forefront of leading his club to premierships in 2024 and 2025 as team captain. Campbell has also been instrumental in the recent revival of representative matches and played in the combined Sydney-Canberra team that beat Tasmania in an historic win at Launceston in 2024.

After playing rugby union from a young age until junior high school, he switched to football, mainly due to the influence of his biggest supporter, his mother (whose father played for Norwood in the SANFL) and joined the St Ives junior club. Campbell was one of eight players from St Ives that played in the 2025 Norths' Premiership team; all of them had been coached by former Sydney Swans and North Shore star rover Robbie Wright. He maintains that Wright, alongside current senior coach Ryan Meldrum have been the biggest influences on his footy career. Campbell came through the Under 19s in North Shore's football program and made his senior debut in 2016 at age 17.

Following a break-out year in 2019, when he won his first club best and fairest award, Campbell stamped his arrival on the Sydney competition as a genuine star with his prolific ball-getting ability and distribution. He topped the medal count in 2022 with 19 votes, but an errant shoulder bump saw him rubbed out for a week and deemed ineligible for the award. It resulted in a sensational four-way tie between team-mate Jake Veale, Noah Caslini (St George), UNSW-Eastern Suburbs' Mitch Conn and Stephen Wray of Pennant Hills – all with 11 votes.

Campbell brushed away the disappointment of the medal loss with outstanding seasons in 2023 and 2024 to share the award in 2023 with Harry McGuire (Pennant Hills) and Manly-Warringah's Kale Gabila with 18 votes. In 2024 he was the outright winner with 19 votes. In 2023 and 2024 he was club best and fairest.

Ned Campbell is still enjoying his football with North Shore in 2026 and he is crucial to the club's quest to make it three consecutive premierships.

Rod Gillett

2023 Kale Gabila Manly Warringah



Kale Gabila was awarded the Phelan Medal playing for Manly Warringah in 2023. Whilst a joint winner alongside Harry Maguire of Pennant Hills and Ned Campbell of North Shore, all tallying 18 votes, it is notable that Gabila played in only 13 games for the year. Gabila played his junior football with the Forest Lions and Willoughby Mosman Swans before commencing his senior football career for North Shore in 2018. He provided a glimpse of his elite potential, polling nine votes over the final three rounds of his debut season for the Bombers. Gabila played with both the Sydney Swans and the GWS Giants in their VFL teams. He joined the Manly Warringah Wolves in 2022, where he continues to play. Kale Gabila credits past Manly coach Leigh Brain with greatly influencing his football. His continued involvement in the game is represented by his position as Schools Competition Coordinator for AFL NSW/ACT across Greater Sydney.

Steve Walliss

2024 Ned Campbell North Shore

Ned Campbell won back-to-back Phelan Medals in 2023 and 2024.

2025 Finbar Delbridge South West Sydney



South West Sydney Blues star ruckman and co-captain Finbar Delbridge won the Phelan Medal in 2026 with 28 votes. A strong physical presence in the ruck and around the ground, Delbridge was an integral part of the Blues team that reached the club's first finals appearance in the Premier Division. Delbridge, who began his football journey with the Apsley Hornets in AFL Queensland, came to the South West Sydney Blues in 2024 after a season in the VFL with the Northern Bullants. He had an immediate impact at the Blues after their return to football in the top division in AFL Sydney. In 2024 Delbridge was awarded the Howarth Medal for his outstanding performances during the representative matches. In addition to the Phelan Medal, he won his club's best and fairest award in 2025. Delbridge returned to the Apsley Hornets in the Premier division of AFLQ for the 2026 season.

Rod Gillett

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